

THE
COVRT OF
CONSCIENCE:

OR,
IOSEPHS BRETHRENS
IYDGEMENT
BARRE.

BY
THOMAS BARNES.

2. COR. I. 12.

Our reioycing is this, the testimonie of our conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, &c.

The guiltinesse of the conscience is the mother of feare. Chrysost.



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TO THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFULL

WILLIAM TOWSE

Sergeant at Law, one of His
MAJESTIES Justice of Peace in
Essex: As also to the Right Worship-
full, the Lady KATHERINE
BARNARDISTON, his beloued
Wife, both my much respected friends.

The Author wisheth the
blessings of this life and
the next.

RIGHT WORSHIPFULL,



I was a saying of
one of the ² Fa-
thers, in an Epistle
to one of his
friends: Two

things are needfull for thee,

A 2

con-

² Ambr. an
Constan. Duo
sunt tibi ne-
cessaria, con-
scientia &
fama, con-
scientia prop-
ter te, fama
propter
proximum

The Epistle

conscience, and credite, conscience for thy selfe, credite for thy neighbour. And not without reason spake he this; for the one is an inward witnesse, the other giues an outward testimony of our doings. The one serues to breed inward consolation, the other to bring outward commendation. But notwithstanding the necessitie of both, yet the best of the two is least regarded, the Philosophers saying being most true: ^b Many feare their credite, but few their conscience. So it fared (as it seemes) with those ten sonnes of holy Iacob, who did mis-use his beloved Ioseph: So they might hide that wrong they did their brother, and saue their credite with their father, little

Senec. de morib.

Plerique famam, conscientiam autem pauci verentur.

Dedicatorie.

little cared they (vntill distresse awaked them) how matters stood in the Court within them. So also it fares with the Secret sinners, and Ciuill liuers of our dayes. To keepe their name good amongst men they are very curious, but to haue a cleere witnesse in their owne conscience, they are nothing studious. That this euill might be somewhat helped, this Treatise haue I compiled; wherein my scope is to bring men to a care of their Consciences as well as their names, knowing the one to be as needfull to cleere them from blame before the Barre of heauen, as the other to keepe them from shame amongst men. For (if Salomon saith true)

A 3

though

The Epistle

^cEccl. 7. 1. though a good name be better then a precious oyntment c. Yet, A good conscience is a continuall ban-

^dProu. 15. 15. Quiet ^d. If any one aske the reason of this my drift: my reason is

two-fold. First, because conscience is fearefull in accusing. Secondly, because conscience is faithfull in recording: which two things (amongst others, according to the tenour of the text) are principally and most largely handled in this Treatise. And good I desire all may doe in, and to the Israel of God.

To your Worships I thought good to dedicate the same: though worthier papers were fitter for your Patronage. If I were not confident of accep-

Dedicatorie.

acceptation: I should not presume to present you with it. Albeit, indeede it had beene fit that my first friends, should haue had my first fruits, yet I hope my second public labours in this kinde, will not be vnwelcome. Howsoever, I owe them, your Worships vnderferued fauours shorne mee, challenge the same, and more at my hands. If you please to vouchsafe them the reading. I doubt not but you shall finde something profitable, though plainly deliuered in an homely stile. If you please to afford them the protection, being so simple and small as they are, you shall get me into stronger bonds, continually to wish to both your Worships, what Iohn did on the behalfe
of

The Epistle, &c.

of the Elect Ladie, and Noble Gaius, even to your soules:

^{2. Ioh. 3.} Grace, peace and mercie^e:
to your bodies health and prof-

^{3. Ioh. 2.} peritie^f: For which he promisetb
to pray, who is

Your Worships at
command, in and
for the Lord.

THOMAS BARNES.

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that
them
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2. Wh
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that man-
of persons
e accu-
were,
ey said
to ano-
, where

The End

2. Ioh. 3

3. Ioh. :

The
meaning
of

Calvin's explanation of the text

THE
COURT OF
CONSCIENCE:

OR,
JOSEPHS BRETHRENS
JUDGEMENT
BARRE.

GEN. 42. 21.

*And they said one to another, We are
verily guilty concerning our bro-
ther, in that we saw the anguish of
his soule, when he besought us, and
we would not heare: therefore is
this distresse come upon us.*



Or to trouble you with any tedious Preface: this Scripture being given by inspiration (as all diuine Scripture is,) and written for our learning, doth
B com-

The summe
and scope
of the
Text.

comprehend in it a Iudiciall act of *Diuine* prouidence, in bringing to iudgement that same mischieuous fact committed by ten of *Iacobs* sonnes, against *Ioseph* their innocent, and harmeleffe brother.

The diu-
sion.

In which act (as it ordinarily falles out in Iudiciall cases,) two circumstances offer themselves to our consideration.

1. The accusers at this Barre.
2. The accusation it selfe.

The first is laide downe in the beginning of the verse. *And they said one to another.* The second in the clause of the verse, *we are verily guiltie concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soule, when he besought vs, and we would not heare, therefore is this distresse come vpon vs.*

The first
part subdi-
vided and
interpre-
ted,

Touching the first (which wee must first handle) we may note two particulars: First the occasion that mooued

of Conscience.

mooued the accusers to come in:
Secondly, the persons, who these
accusers were.

The occasion is gathered out of
the precedent verses, and coupled
to the text by this particle, so that
in this one word *AND*, the occasi-
on is intimated, which stands thus.

A great dearth in *Jacobs* dayes,
raigneth in all the lands about E-
gypt: And (as it is the lot of Gods
dearest seruants, to be common
sharers with other in common ca-
lamities) that good old father with
his whole family was pinched
with it, as well as other places. At
which pinch, hearing of a great
Corne-master in Egypt (little thin-
king it had beene his sonne *Ioseph*,
for whom he had laide aside his
mourning weede so long agoe) he
calles his ten sonnes vnto him,
commands them to hasten into E-
gypt, to this man: to buy and
bring

The Court

bring home some foode for his houlhold. At his command, thither they specke themselves; whither, no sooner were they come, but this Gouvernour (their brother *Joseph*, whom they had once misused, though neuer dreaming it should be hee) seemes (in an holy policie to vse them harshly,^a chargeth them to be Spies, would not accept of the ^b Apologie they made for themselves, putteth them into Ward three dayes, ^c would not suffer them to goe home with corne (for which they came; but on condition, that one of them should remaine his prisoner, vntill the rest went home and fetcht their brother *Beniamin*, (whom they had spoke off) to bring him to him^d.

^a Vers. 15.
19. 20.

These brethren meeting with this harsh and vnexpected entertainment, begin to be somewhat trou-

troubled in their mindes, and each one by his countenance (as it is likely) coniecturing, and guessing at the disturbed motions in anothers minde, by reason of these straights, fall to that parley amongst themselves, which is recorded in the present text. Now then if any shall aske, wherefore this word [*And*] serues in the beginning of the text, when as there is no sentence before, to be fitly ioyned to this speech. I answer, though it doth not ioyne words and sentences, or sentence and sentence together: yet it coupleth minde and mouth, fore-going thoughts, and follow words, implying that such thoughts as arose in their minds about *Iosephs* vsage of them, gaue the occasion, and produced those words of accusation which the text hath in it. So is the occasion: The parties who

B 3 brought

The sense
of the word
And.

2.

brought in the accusation (in these words, *They said one to another,*) you vnderstand already, to be the tenne sonnes of *Iacob*. *Iudah*, *Simeon*, *Leui*, *Dan* and the rest, each ones proper conscience by this occasion, bringing in a seuerall inditement against himselfe, for the wrong formerly offered vnto *Ioseph*.

Hence then we haue two lessons to take forth.

1. *That afflictions are of notable vse to awake the conscience, and make a man confesse his faults.*

2. *That an euill conscience is an accusing conscience.*

For the first, it is as plaine in the text, as you would wish.

Doct. 1.

Distresse

doth occasion many times touch of Conscience, and confession of finnes.

These brethren of *Ioseph*, ha-
uing dealt most vnnaturally with
him their brother, lay a sleepe in
that sinne of theirs, so long as the
day of prosperitie lasted, without
any

any compunction of conscience for it, without making any confession of it: But now when they see themselves in great distresse, pinched with penury at home, vsed hardly abroad, where they hoped for the supply of their wants, thrust into prison, charged falsely to be spies, could not (in their own thinking) be beleeued, when they defend themselves; now I say that they perceiue themselves in these straits, they begin to buckle, the conscience is pricked, and the fault is confessed mutually amongst themselves; which before (as it is like) they were more ready to laugh at, then grieue for. Put a malefactor deservedly vpon the racke, and you shall get that from him in confession, which otherwise he purposed neuer to haue reuealed. So let but afflictions racke the body many times, sinne will

A simile

racke the soule, and the tongue will confesse the guiltinesse of the heart. Examples, both of Elect, and Reprobate, may be produced for the prooie of this.

First, concerning the Elect, how afflictions haue thus wrought with them, the example of *Jonah* doth declare. So long as he was let alone, he disobeyed the voyce of God, fled from the face of God, and slept spiritually in the bottome of his sinne, as corporally in the bottome of the shippe, but when the Lord shook the shippe wherein he was, with the violence of the winde; threatned present destruction to him, and all those that were with him in the shippe; then he could cry out, and confesse, *for my sake, for my sinne, this great tempest is upon you*^a. Memorable and not vnknowne, is the story of *Manasseh*:^b Who in the time of his prospe-

^a Ion. i. 12.

^b 2. Chron.

33. from
the 1. verse
to the 14.

prosperity, reigning in his pompe,
 rebelled against the God of hea-
 uen, reared up the Altars of Baal,
 made groves to worship the whole Host
 of heauen, sacrificed his children to
 Moloch, obserued times, used inchant-
 ments, followed witch-craft, dealt
 with familiar spirits, wrought much
 euill himselfe in the sight of the Lord,
 made his subiects to erre, and to doe
 worse then the heathen; And so long
 as his peace lasted, wee doe not
 reade that euer he confessed one of
 his abominations to God, or to
 man, in token of any remorse for
 the same. But when the Lord brought
 the Captaines of the Host of the King
 of Assyria upon him, who tooke him
 among the thornes, bound him with
 fetters, carried him into Babylon, and
 when he was thus in affliction, then he
 could beseech the Lord, humble him-
 selfe before the God of his fathers, and
 pray vnto him; and so by consequent
 make

^c Psal. 32.

^d Exod. 9.

27.

^e Cha. 10.

16.

make confession of his finnes before him. *Dauids mouth shall also teach this truth.* ^c Psal. 32. Day and night (saith hee in the 4. verse) thy hand was heavy vpon mee; and marke what followeth in the 5. verse. *I acknowledged my sinne vnto thee, mine iniquitie did I not hide. Yea, affliction will moue the mindes, and extort confession from the mouthes of Reprobates also. The thunder and haile, and iudgement of locusts vpon Egypt, can make Pharaoh himselfe to confesse, and say, I haue sinned this time, the Lord is righteous; I and my people are wicked.* ^d *I haue sinned against the Lord your God, and against you.* ^e The very newes and tydings of affliction to come, vpon Ahab, his wife, and posterity, can make Ahab, (though he were one, that sold himselfe to work wickednesse in the sight of the Lord) yet euen to rend his cloathes, put sacke-cloath

of Conscience.

cloath upon his flesh, fast and goe softly,^f and confesse his iniquitie: Inso-
much, that we may truly say of a
great many, that their dayes of af-
liction are their^g birth-dayes of con-
fession.

^f 1. King. 21
 from the
 21. vers, to
 the 28.

^g Beat. Rhen.
 an. in Tert.
 l. de patien.

And good reason for it; for why
 afflictions in themselves are fruits
 of sinne: had not sinne entred in-
 to the world, neither could disea-
 ses, disgraces, pouerties, captivity,
 crosses, and losses, haue befallen
 mortall man, but sinne ouer-sprea-
 ding all, and so afflictions, as fruits
 of sinne, being incident vnto all;
 when men are vnder affliction,
 they will acknowledge their trans-
 gressions, as the cause of the lame.

^{p.} 2. Natales
 agnitiones.

I. Reason

Secondly, afflictions, as one
 calles them, are a practicall law^h.
 Now without the law, sinne is dead,
 not perceiued, as the Apostle spea-
 keth,ⁱ But when the law commeth,
 is when a sense of Gods wrath is
 stirred

2. Reason

^h Paraus in
 Gen. Col.

2029. Affli-
 ctiones sunt
 lex practica.

ⁱ Rom. 7. 9.

stirred vp in vs, not onely by the preaching of the law, but also by afflictions, then *sinne reuiueth*, as the same Apostle sheweth, is felt and called to minde, which being recorded, is also confessed. For though the confession of sin doth not alwayes follow the remembrance of it, yet the remembrance of it, doth alwaies goe before the acknowledgement of it.

Vse 1.
Reproofe
of those
that are
senselesse
of sinne in
the time of
affliction.

What occasion to complaine, doth this point offer vs, of the senselesnesse and stupidity of those who lye vnder the burthen of afflictions, hauing the hand of God vpon them most grieuoufly, some in their bodies, some in their name, some in their estate, sometimes positiuely exercised with the presence of iudgements, sometimes priuatiuely visited with the deprivation of outward benefits, and yet all will not auaille to worke
vpon

upon their consciences, and to make them confesse their sinnes, acknowledge their abominations before the Maiestie of heauen; Nay, they will rather iustifie themselves, as if they were wronged by God, and had not deserved such severity of punishment. How, or how doth affliction loose its force in them? how vnusefull is the day of aduersitie, to such senselesse ones? it is a signe that that man is of a desperate disposition, and in a desperate condition, whom troubles and crosses, which are many for the number, weightie in measure, not light in qualitie, not small in quantitie, can worke no contrition; can, wring no confession from. This is that which made the Lord, so pathetically in the mouth of one of his Prophets, expostulate with the hard-hearted and rebellious Israelites. *Why should*

ye

yee be stricken any more? yet the more
 I smite you, the more you sinne against
 mee: as farre as I can see; as bene-
 fits cannot draw you to contriti-
 on, no more can my rod bring you
 to confession. In another Prophet,
 thus he speakes. *In vaine haue I*
smitten your children, they receiued
*no correction*¹. What an heauy case
 is this, that this, even this, brings
 God into such controuersie with
 his owne people, whom by exter-
 nall priuiledges, hee had visibly
 married vnto himselfe? What?
 not in aduersitie seeke the Lord^m?
 what? in distresse (with *Ahaz*) yet
 more and moreⁿ trespassse and tres-
 passe against him? well might one say
 oh unhappy persons, whom stripes mol-
 life not^o. Well may I say; Not hap-
 py they whom troubles mooue
 not to lay open their sinnes, in the
 sight of the Almighty. * Farre oh
 farre be it from Vs (Beloued) to be
 so

¹ Ierm. 2.
 30.

^m Hof. 5. 15.
ⁿ 2. Chron.
 28. 22.

^o *Sult. in Is.*
 6. 1. p. 33. *In*
felices autem
qui nec vir-
beribus mo-
lescunt.

* Vse 2.
 Exhortati-
 on to bee
 toucht, for
 to make
 confession
 of sinne in
 time of af-
 fliction.

so stupid. Personall afflictions vpon some of vs: Generall vpon most of vs: The streame of our coyne we complaine runnes low, our corne growes deare, markets bad, the earth denies her foizon vnto vs, & more eminent plagues then these (by all probabilities) are imminent ouer vs, and like to vex vs, and shall none of these, not all of these worke vpon vs, and preuaile with vs, to confesse to God what is the cause of these tragicall prologues, these beginning of sorrowes? prouoke we our selues to this duty? learne wee as the Prophet aduiseeth vs, *to take words vnto our selues*^r, and say, *Lord wee haue* ^{Hos. 14.2.} *sinned against thee, and fallen from thee by our iniquitie.* Oh let not Pharaoh rise vp in iudgement against vs: Propound we the patterne of these brethren my text speakes off, vnto our selues. As
distresse

distresse moued them, so let distresse moue vs to acknowledge, how dishonourably we haue dealt with the Lord, how iniuriously with our brethren, how strangely wee haue neglected the day and meanes of saluation, how strongly we haue affected the way and meanes of damnation. When we taste of the bitternesse and sharpnesse of the fruite, looke we to the bitter tree whereon it growes with watry eyes, and sorrowfull spirits; Mourne not so much for the crosse, as the cause of it: talke not so much of the trouble, as the ground of it, which are thy sinnes and thy transgressions. If afflictions worke not vpon thy conscience to make thee contrite, in soule, and willing to confesse thy sinnes to God? what will: whatsoever therefore the distresse be, either for the quality, degree or time
of

of it that thou lyest vnder, make but this wholesome vse of it to thy soule, at length to mourne for thy sinnes at last, to acknowledge thy abominations without any more adoe, let a word preuaile with thee, and the Lord blesse it that it may.

As mans necessity is Gods opportunity to shew mercy: So thy aduersitie, is thy opportunitie, to confesse thine iniquity and deplore thy misery, which if thou dost neglect, what knowest thou whither euer thou shalt haue the like call, the like occasion againe. Wherefore I trow it is best humbling a mans selfe, when he is best fitted for it, and neuer fitter is hee, then in time of aduersitie.

Thirdly, hence we see one reason, why the Lord afflicts his owne children, it workes contrition in them, it workes confession from them, two things wherewith the
C Lord

Lord is greatly delighted. Wherefore when yee see Christians bare and needy, and to want those things which others haue in great abundance otherwise visited, cease to marueile at it, the Lord loues to haue their consciences kept waking, and their tongue kept walking against their owne sinnes before him; and he knowes prosperitie to be a great entrance to either of these, and very dangerous to lull conscience, and tye vp the tongue, and therefore hee giues them a *Michaiahs portion*, feedes them with *a bread of affliction*, and *water of aduersitie*: and blessed be God that by any dealing of his (how tedious soeuer to the flesh) they may be kept with remorsefull hearts, and ready tongues to acknowledge their daily infirmities before his Maiestie.

1. King.

22. 27.

7th c. 4.

Fourthly, doe afflictions worke
vpon

vpon the conscience, and produce
 confession, euen sometimes in the
 wicked themselues, then we may
 see that the Lord will haue glory
 from the wicked, he can make an
Ahab, a *Pharaoh*, &c. to giue vnto
 him the praille of his owne iustice,
 and to confesse that he is righte-
 ous and they wicked, and that
 there is no iniustice in him, deale
 he neuer so rigorously with them.

Lastly, this point ought to be of *Use* 5.
 vse to arme vs, against murmuring
 in the time of affliction, and to
 reach vs with all patience to vn-
 dergoe those troubles, which the
 Lord in his wisdom doth lay vp-
 on vs. Shall wee grudge at that
 which may bring such gaine vnto
 the soule? which (by Gods bles-
 sing) may be of vse to awake our
 drowisie consciences, and stirre our
 lame tongues to that confession
 which one calles the *mistresse* of

*Beate Rhe-
 nan. in Ter-
 tull 469.*

*Magistrum
 virtutis du-
 cem salutis
 visum.*

*In quo igitur sapiens
& bonus
vir à malis,
& in sapien-
tibus differet,
visi quod
habet irri-
tam Pati-
entiam qua
stulti carent.
Lactan. De
vero cultu.
lib. 6. ca. 18.
Cypr. de
bono patien.
fol. 105. In-
venimus de-
nique &
patri ar-
chas, &c.*

Doct. 2. vnto vs.

*An euill
conscience
is an accu-
ser,*

vertue, a guide in the way to felicity,
without which (as Salomon shew-
eth) a man cannot finde mercie at
the hands of God? God forbid we
should be impatient for this, fall
out with Gods prouidence for
this. Wherein I pray, doth a wise
and good man differ from wicked
men and fooles, but onely in this,
that hee hath that patience which a
foole wants. We finde (in Scripture)
that the Patriarchs, Prophets, and all
the iust ones, which were types and fi-
gures of Christ, did keepe nothing
more to the praise of their vertues,
then this, they had learned patience.
As, therefore (beloued) we pray, thy
will be done, so let vs resolue, we will
patiently submit vnto it, knowing
that if we possesse our soules in pa-
tience, much good will redound

I leaue the first point, and come
vnto the second. That an euill con-
science

science hath an accusing office. This truth hath its ground thus. These ten sonnes of *Iacob* had an euill conscience, guiltie of wrong done to their brother *Ioseph*, and now (vpon occasion of some distresse) it acculeth them, it articleth against them. What meaneth the trembling of *Adam* at Gods voice in the garden after hee had eaten the forbidden fruite? What meant * Gen. 3. 10 the quaking of *Fælix* at *Pauls* Sermon of *Temperance and iustice*, and the iudgement to come*, after he had * A& 24. beene incontinent with *Orusilla*, 16. and plaide the tyrant ouer his subjects *? What meaneth the perplexitie of *Herod Ascalonites*, & after *Qual. in A& Hom. 105. p. 265. 266.* he heard of the birth of *Christ*, & So *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 7.* who (as he thought) was like to put him beside his throne? what meanes the feare which *Herod* the foxe had, that *Iohn* the Baptist was risen from the dead, after he had

Mark, 6.
16.

Iob 15.
20.

Reason.

In Epist. ad
Rom. p. 227.
228.
Legis duplex
est opus,
Impleiones,
Notitia.

unjustly taken his head away from him? what meane (I say) all these, and the like examples if it were not the property, of an ill conscience to accuse a man of the sinnes that he committeth. Hence it is that *Eliphaz* saith to *Iob*. *The wicked man feireth all his daies, the sound of trembling is alwaies in his eares*. And doth not the Apostle speake of an accusing property which the conscience hath, in the second chapter of the *Romanes* at the 15. verse?

And the ground of this doctrine I take to be laide downe in the beginning of that verse, where it is said that euen the Gentiles haue the worke of the Law written in their hearts.

Now of the Law, there is a two-fold worke) (as *Brentius* obserueth,) The worke of fulfilling it, the worke of knowledge, the latter of

of which two the Apostle meaneth in that place. Now this worke of knowledge, is to distinguish betwixt good and bad, things honest and dishonest, which worke even the wickedest haue by nature ingrauen in their hearts: for in some measure they know what is honest and to be done, what is dishonest and not to be done, when they then shall leaue that which they know they must doe, and perpetrate that which they know they must not doe, must not their conscience needes accuse them, and condemne them?

Peraduenture against this truth *Obiect.* some will obiect the experience of our times, that we see for the most part, the lewdest and vngodliest persons haue the least heart-smart, the most quiet. Therefore, an euill conscience is not in all, an accusing conscience. Vnto which I

C 4

answer,

Answer. 1. answer: first, with *Bernard's* distinction^c that there is a two fold euill

* Cited by
Hemingius

Syntag. 161
162.

*Mala &
tranquilla,
mala & tur-
bata.*

conscience } Quiet,
and
Vnquiet.

An euill conscience and vnquiet, is without all question of an accusing nature: none denies it. As for an euill conscience and quiet, that is, when a man is swallowed vp in the depth of sinne, that hee doth not so much, as entertaine one thing about repentance, but blind-folded is lead from one wickednesse to another: and them that haue such a conscience, the Apostle calles * *past feeling*,^d yet such as haue lost all iudgement, or compunction of heart, giuen ouer to a reprobate sence. Now this kinde of euill conscience, though it doth not alwaies execute the acts of excusing, yet still it hath the habite, the quality of accusing: and when
it

* ἀπῆλγχε-
νότες.

^d Eph. 4.

19.

it comes to be awakened, it will not onely accuse, but also torment most grievously, most intollerably. And as for those that haue such a conscience, they cannot be said to be quiet, or at peace properly (as you take peace for the tranquility of the minde) but rather to be secure, seared, obdurate and hardened: then which nothing can be worse, nothing more miserable. So then when we see the wickedest liuers, to haue (as the word deemeth, the merriest liues; it is not from peace of conscience, but from a seared conscience, it is not because their conscience hath no accusing power, but because it doth not alwaies execute its accusing office, for it neuer wants matter to accuse. * For besides, though wee see such to liue quietly, and (to our thinking) to be at peace, yet secretly they may haue a sting within them,

Ans^w.

them, which doth vexe, and molest them most grievously, inso-much that *Salomons* saying may be verified of them: in the midst of laughter, the heart is heavy.

Quest.

Answ.

Before I come to the vse: I must answer a question. And this it is, Whither an accusing conscience be alwaies an euill conscience? To which I must give satisfaction by distinguishing of the accusing power of the conscience: And that is to be considered in a two-fold respect: first, in regard of the ground of accusing: secondly, in regard of the consequents of it.

First, for the ground: the conscience doth accuse either vpon a good ground or a false: vpon a good ground it accuseth, when being informed truly, either by the light of nature, or the light of grace, of things to be done or left yndone, it telleth a man of his fault,

fault, in the neglect of the one, in the practise of the other, as for example: *David* knew by the light of nature, that he should doe to others, as he would they should doe to him; and that as he would not haue any man wrong him, either in his wife or life; so no more should hee wrong his brother in the same kinde: he knew also by the Law of God, that neither murther nor adultery were to be committed, heere is the ground: Now vpon this ground his heart smites him, when *Nathan* comes to him, his conscience telles him, that he, euen he had sinned in wronging his brother, both in his life, and his wife: in committing murther against the one, adultery with the other. Thus did *Iosephs* brethrens conscience accuse them heere, for doubtlesse they had learned, that cruelty was not to be exercised against

gainst a naturall brother, the word and nature had taught them this: and therefore after they had wronged him, their conscience accuse them.

Secondly, vpon a bad ground, the conscience accuseth, when an erroneous principle is laid; as for a Masse-priest to bee accused and troubled in his minde, for neglecting his Masse and Popish deuotions, or a Lay-papist for perusing the Scriptures, when as it is not against the word of God, either to neglect the one, or peruse the other.

Secondly, for the consequents that doe follow the accusing of the conscience, they are these. First, sorrow for the offence accused of, whither it be omisſiue or commisſiue, or for the punishment which the conscience telles the delinquent he is lyable vnto. Secondly,
fearc

feare either to commit the like offence againe, or to vndergoe the punishment due for that transgression. Thirdly, securitie arising either from the right appeasement of the conscience, or from the peruerse stopping of the checkes of conscience. Now for the direct answering of the question out of these premises, this is that which I haue to say, that alwaies an accusing conscience is not an euill conscience. And this I can make good out of the premised distinctions. That conscience that accuseth vpon a good ground, and telles the offender, hee hath directly transgressed the Law of God, and withall produceth the best of these consequent effects before spoken off. That conscience which stirreth vp feare to fall into the like sinne againe, that worketh godly sorrow for the sinne committed, that

that breedeth security in assurance
of reconciliation: that conscience,
though it accuseth, yet cannot
properly be termed euill, but ra-
ther tender, and full of remorse: on
the contrary, if the conscience bee
certified vpon Popish grounds, if
after the accusing office of the
conscience; yea, vpon a good
ground also the partie forrowes
more for the punishment deserued,
then the sinne committed; if hee
feareth rather the falling of the
punishment vpon his head, then
dashing himselfe againe vpon the
rocke of the same or the like sinne:
And lastly, if he groweth secure by
stopping the mouth, and negle-
cting the checkes of conscience,
these are true signes that the con-
science is euill which accuseth,
but if otherwise the conscience
may possibly accuse and yet not be
euill nor vncleane. This I thought
good

good to answer it coming necessarily in our way. I will deteine you no longer from the vses which which are: For reproofe, comfort, terrour, and duty. The three former concerne some, with some difference definitely, the latter respects all without difference indefinitely.

First (I say) heere is a ground of *Vse* 1. reproofe vnto those, who haue alwaies matter, and nothing else but matter of accusation against themselves, within themselves; and yet they will stand vpon it, that they haue good consciences; one hath matter of accusation within him for his ryot, another for lust, another for vsury, for bribery, for oppression, for other wrongs done to his neighbour, another for bearing malice, another for lying, false witnessse bearing, priuie flandering, horrible cruelty, shop-theuery, whose

whose consciences can tell them, that thus and thus, they deceiued such and such, so and so they haue deceiued others, at such a time they committed such a villany: in such a place, such impiety: heere they wrought filthinesse, there vn-righteousnesse, &c. neither were they so much as euer mooued for this sinne, they neuer relented for it, neuer repented of it, and yet (I say) they are of opinion (and will not be beaten from it) that they haue good and very good consciences; when as alas: how can it be, this being true that an euill conscience, is an accusing conscience, and so on the other side, an accusing conscience, for the most part an euill conscience. What dost thou man talke of a good conscience, when it is alwaies like the troubled waters casting vp dirt and filthinesse in thine
owne

owne face; when as it is continually ringing a peale of thine abominations in thy eares? thou a good conscience; when thou swearest, lyeest, cheatest, playest the vnmmercifull, incontinent, intemperate beast, slanderest thy neighbour; sittest and speakest against thine owne mothers sonne, breakest Gods Sabbaths, despisest Gods ordinances: It goes against thy conscience (as thou rudely professest) to regard a Preacher, or respect a professor, or walke according to an holy profession; thou a good conscience I say? No no; If indeede, (thy conscience smiting thee vpon good ground) thou wert but drawne to heartie sorrow for thy offences, to an holy feare not to commit them againe, it were something; then thou mightest be beleued, when thou boastest of thy selfe as free from an euill

D

con-

Obiect.

conscience? but otherwise, thou art to be reprooued for vaine-glorious bragging. But I thanke God I am at quiet in my conscience?

Answ.

Art thou so, and yet liuest in thy sinnes? so much the more fearefull is thy condition; no iudgement to a reprobate sense; Oh to be past feeling, this is most pittifull. Sayest thou, thou art at quiet? nay thou deceiuest thy selfe, thy conscience is seared; neither is thy quiet from hence, because thy conscience hath no crime, to lay to thy charge, but because thou wilt not heare thy conscience speake when it doth accuse thee. It may be, because thou wouldest make men beleue thou art not guiltie of those cuils, which happily at some times thou art stung for within thy selfe, therefore thou settest a good face vpon the matter (as some that lye a dying, say they
feare

feare not death) when as indeede they feare nothing more: Or put case thou sayest true (as I said) when thou affirmest, thy minde is not crazed: the more horror remaineth for thee against the time of thine awaking; insomuch, that as *David* said, he should be satisfied with the light of Gods countenance shining vpon him after his rising, thou art like on the other side to be terrified with the goades of thine owne conscience speaking against thee, at the time of thy rowling, vnlesse the Lord bee the more gracious vnto thee. I conclude therefore, it is a great folly (most worthy of reproofe) in thee, to thinke thou hast not an euill conscience, when thy conuersation is vncleane, abounding with noysome evils, as matter of iust accusation against thee.

Secondly, heere is comfort to *Verse 2.*

D 2

those

those that haue good consciences; their happinesse is vnspeakeable, their condition most peaceable; for if so be an euill conscience bee alwaies of an accusing qualitie, then their good conscience is alwaies of an excusing property. Excusing property (I say) or quality, for I denie not but a good conscience may and doth exercise many a time accusing actions. The heart of *David* may smite him, for taking away *Vriahs* life, for defiling *Vriahs* wife^e for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment^f, for numbring his people contrary to Gods commandement^g, I know *Peters* conscience did article against him, for denying and forswearing his Lord and Master^h: and there is neuer a Christian but can witnesse with mee, that his owne conscience tels him daily of his daily faylings; yet I say, his conscience is not an habitual

^e 2. Sam.

12. 13.

^f 1. Sam.

24. 4.

^g 2. Sam. 24

^h Math. 26.

75.

tuall accuser, as to doe nothing else but accuse him, or as though it had nothing else in it selfe, but iust matter of accusation against him: this (I say) he is freed from, which an euill man is not. And rather it hath an accusing power: now for a mans conscience to haue an excusing habite and qualitie, what a sweete and comfortable thing is it? What? free from the terrours of a tormenting soule? free from the wounds of spirit, which mortall strength cannot beare? what man can but admire this? what heart will not exalt and reioyce to feele this? Oh but I am tormented, I am terrified will (the poore Christian say,) * I cannot be so at peace in my selfe, as I faine would be, my conscience is euer and anone about my cares? Very

Obiect.

* For indeede of all others, they are most troubled.

Answe.

like, if it bee tender, it cannot choose but so it must bee. Perad-

uerture, thou hast not yet attained vnto that spirit of adoption, to witnesse to thy spirit in that full measure that thou art the childe of God, happily thou art but yet in the way to attaine vnto it. It may be thou woundest thy conscience, by beeing something too ventrous vpon that which thou hast no warrant for, If it be so; then I doe not much meruaile that thou canst not haue that quiet thou doest desire; and well will it proue for thee at the last, that thy conscience doth so smite thee. But what of this? hast thou no cause therefore to reioyce in the goodnesse of thy conscience? Thy conscience accuseth thee vpon a good ground, doth it? thou fearest the sinne more then the punishment, thou sorrowest for the offence done, more then for the scourge due, doest thou not? thou art willing

ling to heare thy conscience speak,
and thou sayest? *Conscience doe*
thine office, by the grace of God I will
not checke thee, nor stoppe vp mine
eares against thee; thou art carefull
to haue thy conscience pacified by
the right meane, euen by the assu-
rance that through Christ his
blood, thou art purged from the
sinne which thy conscience smi-
teth thee for, art thou not? If yea;
then know thou to thy comfort,
that though thy conscience (when
there is reason for it) doth execute
some accusing acts against thee, yet
habitually it will prooue to bee an
excuser of thee. Wherefore doe not
thou by this cauill cheate thy selfe
of the comfort that belongs vnto
thee. If thy conscience be at ods
with thee vpon some good
ground, giue all diligence to get
it appeased with the assurance of
Gods loue, and cast not downe thy

selfe out of measure, as if thy cōscience had nothing else but matter to accuse thee off. And to encrease thy comfort vpon this ground, meditate thou of the benefits of an excusing conscience: as name-

The benefits of an excusing conscience.

*Quanam
summa boni?
meus qua
sibi conscia
recti, Auson.*

ly, first an excusing conscience will answer and out-weigh all the accusations for sinne, and such and such acts of sin as can be brought in to molest the soule, for such a conscience is purified by the blood of Christ, freed from the guilt of sinne, hath to obiekt Christs merits against its owne demerits, the obiecting of which vpon good ground, will answer all the spitefull cauils of the malicious tempter.

3. Benefi.

Secondly, an excusing conscience will be a rocke of comfort in the time of distresse, when thou lyest vpon thy sicke bed it will acchere thee, as *Ezekiah* did, when he said,

Isa. 38. 3.

*Lord remember how I haue walked
before*

before thee in truth, with a perfect heart, &c. When the world takes her wings and flies away from thee, when thy earthly friends forsake thee, and dispute against thee, and all humane helps faile thee, this will be a cordiall and consolation vnto thee. And which is last ^{3. Benefi.} of all, and yet best of all, it will goe with thee to the iudgement seate of Christ, desie the deuill to his face, acquit thee and absolue thee of all the crimes which euer thou wert, either iustly by the accusing acts of it, or vniustly by the spite of Satan and his wicked instruments charged withall. Loe this is the good, the gaine heere; heereafter, that an excusing conscience doth and will bring thee; and yet thy good conscience hath this excusing quality. Why art thou then so deiected thou Christian, and why is thy soule so sad within thee; the

the Lord comfort thee vpon this ground, the Lord (with this) speak peaceably vnto thy soule.

Vse 3.

Thirdly, heere is terrour vnto thee that hast an euill conscience, knowest thou man what it is? if thou beest ignorant, heare the point in hand telling thee what it is an accusing conscience. And though peradventure thou maiest be secure, haue it lie a sleepe a long time together, yet like a mastiffe curre at last it will awake and be about thy eares; and when it awaketh, who can stoppe the voyce, who can allay the fury of it? thy witte cannot doe it, take *Achitophel*^k for witnesse; Thy wealth cannot doe it, take *Iudas* for example. Thy authority can not do it, take *Iulian* for thy prooffe. Thy sweete bitte and iouiall companie cannot doe it, take ⁿ *Balthazar* for warrant. But what if my consci-
ence

^k 2. Sam. 17

^l Mt. 27. 5.

* Neque ci-

bus volup-

tatem pra-

ebet, neque a-

micorum

colloquia ta-

lem refocilla-

re, vel libe-

rare, ab vr-

gente anxie-

tate possunt.

Chrysost. in

Gen. hom.

19.

ⁿ Dan. 5.

Obiect.

ence doth accule mee? what of that? is it any great matter? Thou shalt know that when thou tryest it. And in the meane time (for what I can answer thee in this impudent demand) this I say to thee. To haue an accusing conscience, habitually is not onely to be deprived of the sweete benefits of an excusing conscience, which I spake off in the former vlc, but also in stead of them, to meete with the contrary inconueniences. First, thine accusing conscience will out-weigh all the good deeds that euer thou hast done, thy prayers, almes, temperate, ciuill, neighbour-like carriage and behauiour, and the like: It shall little auaille thee to alleadge any of these things to thy comfort, when thy euill conscience is vp in armes against thee; A simile. Let a man be iustly accused at some temporall barre for rape, incest, murder

murthering of the innocent, or any felony that deserues death, what will it boote him to pleade his gentility, his hospitality, and that he hath beene a good friend to the common-wealth, &c. if so be his accuser comes in strongly against him, and resolues to prosecute him to the very death? Alas, what would it haue aduantaged *Iudas* to haue alleadged his preaching, his doing of miracles, his casting out of deuils: *Achitophel* his policy, & prouidence for the State & common-wealth, when as their euil cōsciencies did torment them, the one for betraying his innocent Master, the other for plotting treason against his lawfull Soueraigne? I tell thee when conscience is a doing its accusing office, it will neither heare of thy honesty, nor ciuilitie, nor liberalitie, nor any thing else good in it selfe, that hath been done

done by thee for corrupt ends, but it will take them all, as if they had neuer beene done: yea accule thee for failing in the manner.

Secondly, it will deny thee comfort in time of distresse: when thy body is tormented with corporall diseases, and thou lye tossing and tumbling from one side of the bed to the other, and faine wouldest haue ease. When thy corne, cattell, substance, goods are taken away from thee and thou brought to pouertie, when scarcitie pincheth thee, when friends leaue thee, and enemies set against thee, to haue content and quiet within, it were some comfort, but (oh miserable person) that is not to be had, thy conscience is buffeting thee, and vexing thee within, dealing with thee as the consciences of these brethren, with them suggesting matter of terrour vnto them in the
time

*Conscientia
mala bene
sperare non
potest. Aug.
in Psal. 31.*

time of their outward extremitie.

And lastly, whē thy accusing cōscience comes at the bar with thee after this life, it will be a co-partner with
 * Apoc. 12. that * accuser of the brethren Sa-
 10. tan against thee, to the viter overthrow, and euerlasting confusion. Now go to thou seared sinner, thou stiffe-necked offender, aske in scoffing wise, what matter it is if thy conscience doe accuse thee. Loe, thou seest what a matter it is; And were it not that I wanted a tongue to expresse, and then an eye to behold, an heart to consider the fearefulnesse of thy condition, it could not choose but be like the sight of the figures that *Balshazzar* saw vpon the wall, or else like the sound of the Sermon that the Jewes heard Saint *Peter* preach °,
 ° Act. 1. even an occasion to make thy loynes shake and thy ioynts trem-
 ble

ble, thy heart soft, and thy soule humble, what? no comfort to be reaped by thee, in the best actions thou performest? In likelihood to be left like a desolate forlorne and comfortlesse creature in the time of distresse? in ieopardie to haue the sting of conscience persuing of thee to Gods iudgement barre, the worme of conscience, gnawing on thee, for euermore after thy few and euill dayes be ended? what can be more terrible, more woefull? Verily, if the thought of these things preuaile not to humble thee, these terrours are as like to ouertake thee as death it selfe, then which nothing is more sure, more certaine. The Lord therefore mooue thy heart with this, if it bee his holy will. Amen.

Lastly, heere is indefinite exhortation to all without difference, *Use 4.*
that

that they would giue all diligence both to attaine and reteine consciences that are good, both to bee freed of and preserued from consciences that are euill. The exercise of this two-fold duty, tooke vp a great deale of Saint *Pauls* care, as appeareth in sundry protestations (of his diligence in this kinde) in the seuerall Epistles which he writeth vnto the Churches. Now if the worthy example of that worthy Apostle be to bee followed by vs in any thing that euer he did, it is to be imitated and followed in this; and that so much the rather, because of the ground to perswade to, and the motiue to enforce the duty, which the doctrine in hand affordeth; telling vs that an *euill conscience* is an accusing, a vexing, a tormenting conscience. Now tell mee who would be willing to bee pestered with a
tor-

tormenting conscience? who takes any pleasure to haue the darts of the Almighty dagging at the heart; or the arrowes of the Almighty drinking vp of the spirit? Quiet of soule and tranquillity of minde is that that All doe naturally desire. The vngodly themselves wish for peace, and rather then they would be without it, they will content themselves with a false peace, with carnall securitie. And there is none that liueth vnto whom terrours and tortures internal and inward are not tedious and irkesome, would we then be freed and preserved from such terrours, such wounds, such daggers? would we haue true peace, and sound tranquillitie indeede? then let (as I saide) endeauour to get good consciences if we want them, & to keepe them if we haue them, or when we shal attaine vnto them.

E

And

And for better furtherance in so weighty a duty as this is, I will commend to Gods blessing and thine vse, two rankes or sorts of rules. In the first whereof I will prescribe remedies to cure the malady of an euill conscience, or set downe meanes to bring thee to a good conscience. In the second I will prescribe antidotes to keepe thee from falling into the same disease of an euill conscience againe, or acquaint thee with helps to keepe thy conscience sound and good if it bee so already. In both of which before thou goest any further, I desire at thy hands a resolution to vse both, so neither I in writing this, nor thou in reading shall loose our labour.

Remedies
to cure an
euill, or
meanes to
get a good
conscience.

For the first, I minde to lay a ground out of which to draw the rules, or some of the rules at least, and that ground shall be the definition

tion or description of a good conscience and a bad.

P Some define a good conscience thus.

P *Pisca. in*
1. Tim. 1.
Obs. 24.
What a
good conscience is.

A good conscience, is the iudgement of our minde approving that which we doe, as pleasing to good, because that we our selues please God through Christ, and because we study to please him, with a serious purpose of walking according to his will.

Others more briefly thus.

A good conscience, is a ioy, springing out of the remembrance of a life holily and honestly led, or a confidence of sinne remitted.

Heming.
Syntag.
161.

As for a bad conscience, I take it to be contrary to the good, and may be defined either, first thus.

A bad conscience is the censure of the minde, disallowing that which we doe as displeasing to God, insomuch as neither our persons doe please him through Christ, nor (as our consci-

What a bad conscience is.

ences tell us) we studie to please him in our liues with a stedfast purpose of heart to conforme vnto his will.

Or secondly thus: *An euill conscience*, is a trembling and feare arising out of the remembrance of a life lewdly & wickedly led. This ground by these descriptions thus laide, I draw out these directions, for the getting of a good, and ridding of an euill conscience.

1. Remedy
of an euill
conscience.

The first is the spirit of discerning, a iudgement to discerne of things that differ. For it is requisite that a good conscience should be informed vpon a good ground, true principles, now how can that be, except a man hath iudgement to try and discerne the ground, whither it be sound or false? It is the office of conscience, either to allow or disallow, but how can it allow of what is good, or disallow that which is euill, except the party hath

hath knowledge both of good and euil, that is, what is good, and what is euill. A right vnderstanding heart, and a good conscience; a blinde minde, and a bad conscience; are ordinarily yoaked together. If Papists did not make ignorance the mother of deuotion. If our generation of vnwise and carnall ones did not like to liue in blindnesse of heart without saving knowledge, both the one and the other would haue better consciences then they haue. My counsell therefore to thee, is this, to get those chaines of darkenes wherewithall thy heart is fettered, pulled off, and those mists of ignorance, with which thy vnderstanding is darkened remooued away, that thou maiest be able to discerne of things that differ, that so the right information of thy minde, may prooue to be a meane of the sound

reformation of thy conscience, and so that goodnesse may be restored to it, which by nature thou art quite bereaued and depriued off.

2. Remedy.

Secondly, when thou hast attained vnto a sound iudgement, and canst put a difference betwixt good and euill, then it shall bee good for thee to approoue of, the one to disallow the other. For when men against the light of their own knowledge, shal like *Iulian*⁹ & *Ecebolius*¹ disallow of that which is good, and like the Scribes and Pharisees approoue of that which is euill, is it possible for them, so long as they so remaine, to be remedied and cured of their euill consciences?

⁹ Socr. hist.
lib. 3. cap. 1.
¹ Idibid. c.
11.

Paul praies on the behalfe of the brethren at *Philippi*, that they might approoue of things that are excellent^f, which prayer hee would haue neuer made, had not he scene it,

^f Phil. 1. 10.

it, a matter very vsfull and need-
full against an euill, and for a good
and honest conscience, to approue
of things honest according to the
excellency of the same: Wee see
men and women, to dislike of hear-
ring of Sermons in publike assem-
blies, of offering vp sacrifice in
their priuate families, of making
profession of religion; and they
like better of beeing present at
stage-playes, the very theaters of
lust: *Of ryoting in Tauernes, and*
tap-houses, being (as they are abu-
sed) *the very schooles of the deuill:*
they approue better of allowing
inordinate courses. And hence it
comes to passe that their consci-
ences are so vile and euill as they
are. Deale plainly with me now,
doest thou in good earnest desire a
good conscience; like of that
which is good, as most worthy to
be loued, dislike of that which is
euill,

For so Ter-
tullian calls
it. lib. de
Spectaculis.
694. Thea-
trum venge-
ris.

euill, as most worthy to be hated, and in time thou shalt finde thy loue so strongly inflamed towards the one; thy hatred so soundly sharpened against the other; that thy conscience shall be cleere before God, and honest towards men.

3. Remedy.

Thirdly, hearken to the chekes of conscience; be willing to heare conscience speake, and to take a carefull view of those articles, which it presenteth vnto thee, and bringeth in against thee.

Seneca E-
pist. lib. 1.
Epistola 43.
ad calcem.
O te mise-
rum si con-
temnis hunc
testem.

O miserable man that thou art, (could the heathen say) if thou contemnest this witnesse. When thy conscience sets vpon thee, as Nathan did vpon David, thou art the man; or thou art the woman that hast failed in this duty, fallen into this iniquity, omitted that good, committed that euill; thinke in thy heart it is verily true, and say in thy

thy selfe, as *David* to *Nathan*: *I haue sinned.*

In the fourth place, sorrow thou after a godly manner, for those euils which thy conscience (being rightly informed) chargeth thee withall; imitate *Saint Peters* conuerts; who no sooner were accused in their consciences by occasion of his Sermon, of that crime of crucifying Christ, but they were pricked, touched with remorse and sorrow for the same. Oh if as often as thy conscience imites thee, thou hadst but the grace with *Ephraim* to imite thy thigh and say, what haue I done, thou wouldst grow to haue a great deale better conscience then thou hast.

4. Remedy.

5. Remedy.

u. Iodoch.

Willich. in

1. Tim. 1.

19.

Qui in fide-

litatis mor-

bo laborat,

huius non

potest esse

bona consci-

entia.

Fifthly, Faith is helpfull and necessary in this worke: For he that is wholly diseased with unbeleefe (saith one^u) his conscience cannot bee good. This is plainly intimated by

Saint

*Heb. 9.
13, 14.

Saint *Paul* to the *Hebrewes*, in a comparison which there hee v-
 seth *. *If the blood of Bulls and Goates,*
and the ashes of an Heifer, sprinkling
the uncleane, sanctifieth to the purifi-
ing of the flesh: How much more shall
the blood of Christ, who through the
eternall Spirit offered himselfe with-
out spot to God, purge your consciences
from dead workes to serue the living
God? In which words by an ana-
 logie betwixt the type and the an-
 titype, the Apostle prooueth the
 efficacy of Christs cleansing; which
 cleansing he calles the purifying of
 the conscience from *dead workes*,
 yea from sin which bringeth death,
 and is liued in, by men that are
 spiritually dead. Now if the con-
 science cannot bee cleansed from
 sinne but by the blood of Christ,
 then it cannot become good, but
 by faith which apprehendeth the
 blood of Christ to our purging.
 And

And besides, if so be a good conscience be, (as is exprest in the first definition *,) *the iudgement of the minde, approouing of that which we doe as pleasing to God, because our persons please God, or else (as is shew- ed in the second definition) a confidence of sinne remitted,* what doth this argue but a necessity of faith, to get a good conscience, by which faith (as it apprehends the righteousness of Christ) both our *persons* come to please God, and our soules are confident of the pardon of our sinnes? Well then wouldst thou be purged from an euill conscience? doe this; when thy conscience (being rightly informed) hath accused thee as guilty of such and such sinnes, and thou beest heartily sorry and truly humbled for the same, get thee by faith to the fountaine of Christs blood, bathe thee in it, seeke to haue thy conscience appea-

* Page 66.

appeased by the assurance of the pardon of thy sinnes through Christ Iesus alone, make this thy maine drift of giuing attendance vpon Gods ordinances, and thy euill conscience will be as effectually cleansed from those evils that make it bee, as by the legall cleansings in the ceremoniall law, flesh was wont to be purged from leprosie, pestilence, or any such like filthy contagion.

6. Remedie,

Lastly, the study and practise of a godly life, breedeth and bringeth a good conscience; And this helpe the last clause in the first definition of a good conscience affordeth, where is prooued that therefore a good conscience doth approoue of what we doe as good, as well because wee haue an earnest studie and serious purpose of walking according to Gods will, as because we know our persons pleasing to God through

through faith in Christ. And Saint Peter makes it good, in his first Epistle third chapter, 15, and 16. verses, where speaking of a good conscience, he ioynes withall, both *a sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts*, that is, a study and serious purpose to serue him, and also a *good conuersation in Christ*, to stop the mouthes of those that are ready to accuse vs as euill doers, that is a practise of the workes of righteousness, giuing vs to vnderstand that it is impossible to haue a good conscience, except we lead & purpose & study to lead a godly life.

These are the rules I thought good to lay downe for thy furtherance in getting a good conscience; If hauing vied the same heretofore thou hast found it already, or by Gods blessing shalt obtaine it afterward; to the end thou mayest keepe it, marke a word
or

or two more: and then I will bring thee out of this point, wherein I haue held thee longer then I thought at the first.

How to
keepe a
good con-
science.

Simile,

And to this purpose, I will lay downe one generall caution, out of which I will draw the whole direction, and that is, it shall bee good for thee, to take heed of offering any wrong or violence thereunto: If it be as wee commonly vse to say, it is great pittie to enforce an entire friend to inconueniences against his will; it is much more pittie to enforce a good conscience, (whereunto no earthly friend is comparable, both in regard of the good that it doth vs in the time of prosperitie, and the comfort it brings vs in the day of aduersitie? Now the conscience is enforced, or hath violence offered vnto it two waies, either when we would haue it more large then it should

should be, or more streight then it neede be.

First, the conscience is made more large then it should be, presuming, or venturing further in the omission of some duty, or in the giuing place to some infirmie, then there is warrant. Vnto which presumption there are these five steppes or degrees.

First, a secret wish that such a thing might be done, which wee know to bee vnlawfull, that such a duty were not required, which we know to bee strictly enioyned.

Secondly, vpon this wish an expostulation with our selues, whether it may bee no way lawfull to commit that vice, to neglect that duty, so making that now questionable, which before we knew to be absolute euery way vnlawfull.

Thirdly, a strong imagination vpon

1. How the by-conscience is made too large.
Degrees to presumption, which tend to make the conscience too large.
1. Degree.
2. Degree.

3. Degree.

vpon this question, that it may be very gainetull and commodious, if we doe take some liberty to our selues in this kinde.

4. Degree.

The fourth degree, is to propound vnto our selues the infirmities of the Saints for our patterne, reasoning thus, *as good Christians as I am, better men then I am, haue done thus and thus, haue neglected this and this, and therefore I may be bold without any great danger, &c.*

5. Degree.

And the fift is a carelesse conclusion, that if it bee but once or twice done, or seldome neglected, it cannot bee hurtfull, *God is mercifull, wee are in his fauour, his loue cannot alter, and I know not what.* And so by consequent from all this premises, a presumptuous perpetrating of the offence. By these degrees, wee come to presume, and to stretch conscience (to
the

the wounding of it,) beyond its bounds, which is one kinde of enforcing of it.

Secondly, the *Conscience* comes to bee streightened three manner of wayes: first by ignorance in the nature of the obligation, and subiection of the conscience: secondly, by yeelding vnto doubtings: thirdly, by a kinde of temporary despaire, either of Gods prouidence to relecue vs in our temporall wants and dangers, or of his readinesse to accheere vs in our spirituall desertions.

2. How the conscience is made too streight.

That the first of these euils doth streighten the conscience, it is plaine by this argument. *Whatsoever doth cause scrupulous distraction or distracting scruple, doth bring the conscience into streights.*

But ignorance in the nature of the binding and subiecting of the con-

F

science

science doth cause scrupulous distraction. Therefore such an ignorance streightens the conscience. For when the Christian knows not thoroughly what things binde the conscience. Wherein *conscience* is to be subiect, how farre forth things binde, nor how or in what cases, with what conditions conscience is to submit, must it not needes bring him into a world of distractions? How can it otherwise bee?

Secondly, that yeelding to doubtings, doe fraighten the conscience, it is cleere, because doubtings are enemies to the peace of the conscience, which peace is the * consciences sweete enlargement. Vnto this peace also despaire of Gods prouidence, either ouer the outward man in the time of affliction, or ouer the soule,

* *Cordis delectatio est cordis dilatatio.*
August.

foule, in the time of desertion, is an aduersary; therefore thirdly despaire must needs also distresse the conscience.

Well then, wouldst thou keepe a good conscience, as a continuall feast, obserue in generall, two rules. Allow no larger bounds to thy conscience, then with warrant thou maiest by vaine presumption. Bring thy conscience into no more thraldome and bondage then thou needest.

To helpe thee in the first, that thou maiest not presume: marke these particulars.

Subordinate helpes, to the obseruing of the first generall rule.

First, doe not wish in thy heart any vnlawfull thing to bee lawfull, that thou mightst the safer commit it, nor any necessary duty indifferent, that thou mightst not be tyed vnto it.

Secondly, if thou beest well in-

formed of the vnlawfulnesse of any euill, of the necessitie of any duty, abiure the court of faculties in thy conscience, enquire not after a dispensation for thy selfe in speciall, expostulate not whether thou mayest, or mayest not, commit it, or neglect it.

3. Be not of conceite that neglect of any holy or necessary duty, or the committing of any sinne can be gainefull and aduantageable to thy outward state. For it is a silly gaine that is purchased with a wound to the spirit, and a cracke to the conscience.

4. Set not the infirmities of beleeuers before thine eyes for imitation, but for caution, not to embolden thee, to doe as they did, but to make thee the more obseruant of thine owne waies, least that thou shouldest doe as they did. For
euery

every fatte stands vpon its owne bottome; and little peace wilt thou haue to imitate any mortall man, in that which is offensive to thy God.

5. Conclude not that thou wilt but doe the deede once, or twice, or seldome; For sinne is like a serpent, if it gets but in the head, it will get in the whole body, and it is a clinging and encroaching guest; whereof thou canst not be so soone rid as thou listest, after thou hast giuen entertainment vnto it: neither thinkest thou maiest be the bolder, because thou art in Gods fauour, which can neuer change nor alter: thou art not so sure of heauen, but that the deuill (though he cannot robbe thee of it) yet can make thee question it to the perplexing of thy soule. Take heede (I say) that by these

F 3

steps

steps thou climbest not vp the ladder of presumption, for then that there is no greater enemy, to an holy and blamelesse life, the maintaining of which holy life, is the greatest preseruative to a good conscience that can be.

Subordi-
nate helpe
to the se-
cond gene-
rall rule.

1.

Secondly, as thus by presuming, thou must not stretch thy conscience. So to the end thou mayest not streighten conscience, thou must doe three things.

First, get a sound knowledge and right vnderstanding of the binding, and subiection of the conscience, to wit, whereby and how it is bound, wherein and how it is to be subiect.

What binds
the consci-
ence imme-
diately viz.
Law, Gos-
pell,

Now for thy better informati-
on in this, know that some things
binde the conscience immediately
or properly; some things, mediate-
ly or improperly. First immedi-
ately

arely, that doth binde the conscience, which hath most absolute power and authoritie in it selfe over the conscience, and thus the Law and Gospell bindes the conscience; or the word of God comprehended in the bookes of the Old and New Testament. First, for the Law.

1. Law, and that either as morall, iudiciall, ceremoniall.

That is three-fold, morall, iudiciall, ceremoniall.

The morall Law respecteth the duties of loue which wee owe to God and our neighbour, comprised in the first and second table, now to know how this binds conscience.

1. How the morall Law bindes the conscience.

these two rules must be obserued. First, *That the second table must giue place to the first, inso-much that if two duties come in opposition one to the other, and the first table binds the conscience to the one, the second to the other, simply by it selfe,*

Two rules to shew how the morall law bindes the conscience.

1. Rule.

that duty which is inioyned in the first, must be performed rather then that which is prescribed in the second.

The rule
amplified.

To amplifie it. The second table binds me to performe all testimonies of loue to my neighbour; the first to execute all offices of pietie towards God; Such and such a testimony of loue to my neighbour, may in some case not stand with my piety towards God: in this case my conscience must submit it selfe, rather to the pleasing of God, then pleasing of man. Albeit, in some case we are to neglect some duties to God, that wee may releue the present necessitie of our brother, which is warranted by that rule of Christ; I will haue mercy and not sacrifice.

2. Rule.

The second rule is this; *That the generall Law must giue way to the speciall.* Take an example, or two.

Thou

Thou shalt doe no murther: Thou shalt not steale are generall lawes. The rule exemplified.
Abraham take thy sonne, thine only sonne Isaac, and offer him up in sacrifice. Every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in the house, iewels of silver, and iewels of gold, and yee shall spoile the Egyptians, were speciall commandments. Both of these, euen generall and speciall, doe binde the conscience: In this case, which must Abraham and the Israelites chiefly submit vnto? To the speciall; he must attempt to sacrifice, his sonne, notwithstanding this, *Thou shalt doe no murther.* They must rob the Egyptians of their iewels and treasures, notwithstanding that precept; *Thou shalt not steale.* Why? because the speciall had at that time more power over the consciences of Abraham, and the Israelites then the generall.

From

2. How the
judiciall
law bindes
the consci-
ence.

From the morall to come to the judiciall law; which was of use to prescribe the Mosaicall forme of ciuill gouernment, concerning the order offices of Magistrates and Magistracie, iudgements, punishments, contracts, difference of gouernment, to the end that publike iustice might bee maintained, peace continued, and the contempt of Gods law reuenged.

This Law so farre bindeth the conscience now, as it is euer duely grounded vpon the morall, and where the same reason holdeth thus, as it did in them and other nations by the light of nature practised in the same manner.

3. How the
ceremoniall
law bindes
conscience.

Thirdly, the ceremoniall Law (*which treateth of rites and ceremonies enioyned in the Old Testament, to be obserued about the outward worship of God*) is to bee reduced to three

three distinct times, according to which times, three rules may be given to shew how farre forth *conscience* is subiect to that.

The first rule is this. *Before the death of Christ, the ceremoniall law did binde the consciences of the Iewes, and the Iewes onely, not of the Gentiles.* For betwixt Iewes and Gentiles, there was a wall of separation. 1. Rule.

The second this. *From the death of Christ, to the overthrow of the Iewish gouernment, the ceremoniall law lost the force of binding, and became an indifferent thing, either to be used or not to be used.* Hence it was that Paul circumcised Timothy, but would not circumcise Titus. And the^r councell at Ierusalem, decreed 2. Rule. A& 15. that the Church should abstaine for a time from things strangled, and from blood; the cause of which decree was the *weakenesse* of some who

who of Iewes were made Christians. As yet they did not fully vnderstand the libertie of the new *Testament*, therfore for their weaknesse sake, it was granted that they might vse some Iewish ceremonies for a time.

3. Rule.

But thirdly, *after the euerſion of the Iewish gouernment, and the promulgation of the Goſpell, more largely and cleerely the ceremoniall law altogether ceaſed.* For from that time, the *libertie of Christians* and freedom from Iewish ceremonies, was ſo conſpicuous that none of the godly could alleadge their ignorance heerein. Wherefore very well ſay the *Schooles*, * *Ceremoniall lawes are now dead and deadly.* Thus we ſee the nature of the *lawes*, authority ouer the conſcience.

* *Leges ceremoniales iam ſunt mortua, & mortifera.*

2. How the Goſpell bindes.

Now we will ſee how the Goſpell bindes the *conſcience*. For the better vnderſtanding of which, we muſt

must know that the Gospell doth not binde the consciences of those that are not called, but onely of them that are called. That it doth not binde the vncalled, it is plaine. Because as they *which sinne without the Law, shall perish without the Law*^a; so they which sinne without the Gospell, shall perish without the Gospell, but they which perish without the Gospell, are not bound by the Gospell; therefore the vncalled are not bound by the Gospell. Secondly, that it bindes these that are called, I meane separated from Pagans and Infidels, it is manifest also by this reason. *All those that are called, shall be iudged at the last day by the Gospell, as is to be seene, Rom. 2. 16. Ioh. 3. 15. 18.* But it is necessary that *that same thing*, by which men shall be iudged after this life, should binde their consciences in this life: therefore

^aRom. 2.
12.

Quest.

Ans^r.

fore the Gospell bindes the consciences of the called. But what doth it binde them vnto? To beleeue the promises of iustification, saluation, speciall prouidence, and loue.

Obiect.

Yea but *hypocrites* are called into the Church, and if they be bound to beleeue their saluation, they are bound to beleeue that which is false, for the promises of the Gospell, concerning the fauour of God, pardon of sinne, &c. belong not to them. I answer, That they which are called into the Church, are not absolutely bound to beleeue their owne saluation, but on this condition, (according to the tenour of the couenant) that *they desire* truly to be in the number of Christs true Disciples. But to bee the true schollers and Disciples of Christ, to learne of him, to follow him, hypocrites doe not seriously desire,

Ans^r.

desire: therefore their consciences are not absolutely bound to beleue their owne saluation.

Thus thou vnderstandest how *conscience* is to be subiect to things that doe *immediately* binde it.

Now as touching the things that doe binde it *mediately*, (that is, not of themselues, but by vertue of that obligatory power, that they haue from the word of God) they are foure: first, *the lawes of man*: secondly, *oathes*: thirdly, *vowes*: fourthly, *promises*.

Things
mediate to
to oblige
conscience.

Concerning the first, how farre forth conscience is to submit to humane lawes, thou shalt know if thou markest these foure rules following.

Concerning the first, how humane *lawes* doe binde wee shall know, if wee ponder these foure

Rules to
vnderstand
the subiecti-
on of con-
science to
Mans laws.

*Lawes of men, whither they bee
Ciuill,*

Ciuilt or Ecclesiasticall, doe binde the conscience so farre forth as they are agreeable to Gods Law. 2. As they conserue order, or keepe from confusion and doe not take away Christian libertie. 3. For if they haue these conditions, they are obligatorie, and binding by vertue of the fift commandement. Honour, thy father, and particular precept given by Saint Paul; Let every soule be subiect to the higher power^b. But if it so fall out, that these lawes constituted by men, be not about things indifferent, but good in themselves, that is to say commanded of God, then they are not properly humane but diuine: and therefore doe altogether binde the conscience. Lastly, if those lawes doe prescribe things that are euill, they are so farre from hauing any power ouer the conscience, that the conscience is most strictly bound
not

^b Rom. 13.

1.

not to obey them^c. Wherefore we plainly affirme against the opinion of the Papists, that neither Civil nor Ecclesiasticall iurisdiction, hath any **CONSTRAINING** or **compulsive** power immediately and directly over the conscience: so that it was well said of Maximilian the Emperour, to seeke to domineere over the conscience, is impudently to invade the tower of heaven; And of *Stephanus King of Polonia*, Three things are impossible to man, to make something of nothing, to know things to come, and to rule or Lord it over the conscience. That same *Psychotyranny*, therefore of the Papist which is most cruell, most *Pharonicall*, doe we detest and abhorre.

Secondly, the **POLITIK** lawes, Rule of man have so farre an obligatory power in the conscience, that the violating of them, especially if it be ioyned either with the offence of their

Act 4. 19.
Conscientijs
velle domi-
nari est ar-
cem cœli in-
vadere.

* Cited by
Alstedius in
Theol. Cas. c.
2 p. 10.

Tria sunt
homini im-
possibilia,
Ec.

Psychoty-
rannoplus-
quam Pha-
raoniam, &
Phalaricam.

brethren or contempt of authoritie, it is iustly to be accounted for a sinne against God, though not immediately.

3. Rule,

Thirdly, the ECCLESIASTICAL lawes of men, are either of things necessarie without which an order, and decorum cannot be kept in the Church, or else of things indifferent. Those that are of things necessary, doe binde by the force of that diuine law written by Paul, *Let all things be done decently and in good order*^d. They that are of things meerely indifferent doe not binde so strictly, except the neglect of the same, occasioneth offence to the weake, or be with contempt of Ecclesiasticall authoritie.

Cor,

This for information about the mediate binding of conscience, by humane lawes.

How an oath binde conscience.

Secondly, An oath binde conscience, if it hath these foure conditions.

tions. First, *if* (for the matter of it) it be of things certaine and possible. Secondly, *if* (for manner) it be made or taken without guile, sincerely and honestly. Thirdly, *if* (for the end) it be to Gods glory, or the publike good. Fourthly, *if* (for the author) it bee taken by those who have power so to binde themselves. Therefore Herods oath did not binde his conscience, because it did not tend to Gods glory, and was of a thing beyond his commission, with warrant to performe. But if an oath hath (I say) those conditions, it bindeth by the vertue of that commandement which Moses layes downe. Numb. 30. 2. *If a man sweare an oath, to binde his soule with a bond, he shall not breake his word, he shall doe according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.*

Now in the third place, for the subiection of conscience to vovves. We must vnderstand that vovves

3.
How vovves binde conscience.

[Lev. 27.]

are of three sorts, *morall*, *ceremoni-
all*, and *free*. A *morall vow*, is that
promise of morall obedience to
the law of God made in Baptisme,
renued in the Lords Supper. And
this bindes all Christians at all
times. A *ceremoniall vow*, is a pro-
mise of ceremoniall obedience in
the Old Testament, such as was
the vow of the Nazarites ^c. And
this did onely binde those who
made it. A *free vow*, is a promise
of performing some outward
thing, vndertaken for the cause of
exercising pietie, *as vowes of fasting*
or the like, for furtherance in the
exercise of prayer, of repentance,
&c. And this is of a binding pow-
er, if there be in it; first, a congrui-
tie with the word of God; second-
ly, no repugnancie with our cal-
ling; thirdly, if it be no spoyler of
Christian libertie; and finally, be
not made out of an opinion of any
meri-

meriting thereby. If (I say) it be thus qualified and limited, it binds conscience by the power of that diuine precept; which is in Eccles. 5. 4, 5. *When thou vowest a vow to God, deferre not to pay it; Better it is thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*

Lastly, that thou maiest know ^{4. How} how promises ^{promises} doe binde the consci- ^{binde con-} ence; thou must obserue this rule. ^{science.}

That a simple promise (I meane distinguished from a promise, mixt and bound with an oath, it doth oblige and binde the conscience at the will of him, to whom it is made, so that if he to whom thou makest it, will release thee from the performance of it, thou art free: if he require it, thou art bound in conscience to make it good; if so be it hath these requisites.*

* See promises are debts.

If it be first not against Gods word: secondly, not against honesty: thirdly,

if thou beest such an one as hast power to binde thy selfe by such a promise: fourthly, if he whom thou hast made it vnto, did not circumuent, and get thee in by guile and deceit to make it: fifthly, if the performance of it remaine possible and lawfull. If it hath these conditions; it binde by vertue of the ninth commandement. Thus of these things considerable about the binding and subiection of conscience, must thou get knowledge and information of, if thou wouldest not streighten conscience, and so wouldest preserve the goodnesse of it.

2. Helpe
against
straig-
htening con-
science.

Secondly, thou must take heede of yeelding to doubtings; of yeelding I say, For tempted to doubt thou shalt be, be thy conscience neuer so good, but yeeld not to the same; hold Satan worke at the staues end, and when he shall shoote his darts in this kinde against thee,

rel-

telling thee, God is thy enemy, thou art not his childe, heaven shall not be opened unto thee, hell fire is prepared for thee: (notwithstanding, all thy professing and paines taking) beare them off with the shield of faith. If thou let goe the soundnesse of thy confidence, thou wilt shrewdly diminish the goodnesse of thy conscience. The keeping of faith and a good conscience are ioyned together, they that make hauocke of the one, will easily make shipwracke of the other; take heede therefore of dashing thy faith vpon the rocke of doubtings by yeelding vnto them. And to conclude, take heede also of rushing vpon the rocke of despaire; when the Lord layes his hand in wisdom vpon thee, and thou art tempted to despaire of ever obtaining any helpe from him. When (for reasons best knowne to him-

3. Subordinate help.

selfe) he shall withdraw the light of his countenance, which with ioy thou wert once wont to behold, and thou shalt then be tempted to thinke, he will neuer visite thee with his fauour againe: yeeld not to these temptations, be not out of hope; but nourish, cherish, and maintaine thy hope still how-soeuer. For there can be no better way to keepe thy conscience good and sound, then to maintaine thy faith against doubtings, and thy hope against temptations tending to despaire. Thus at length I haue found an end of this point, the successe whereof I commit to God, the vse whereof I commend to thee; hastening now to the second part of the text. Which is

The second
part of the
Text.

The accusation it selfe, which these accusers brought in against themselves, in these words.

We

The Table of the second part.

2. The Accusation which the Accusers bring in, in which note

1. The division and interpretation together, where

1. The forme, H. V. We are verily guiltie, & meaning of it, p. 89.

2. The matter which is a case of wrong, in which wrong we have 3. things,

1. The object or partie wronged, concerning our brother, & sense. p. 89.

2. The Subject or wrong it selfe aggravated by two phrases.

3. The Effect, H. V. Therefore is this distresse come vpon vs: with the meaning. p. 91.

1. We sae anguish soule, & sense. p.

2. Where besought we would heare, & sense. p.

2. The doctrines which are,

1. Propounded together, appearing to be fine in ber. pag. 92.

The first, or third in the order of the (That in confession of sinne, must be ingenious,) pag. 93.

The second or fourth, (That confession is a faithfull recorder,) pag. 10

The third or fift in order, (That by much the neerer bonds we are to one another, by so much forer torment shall we meete in our consciences,) pag. 123.

The fourth or sixt in order, (That shall be requited, like for like woe offer wrong,) pag. 130.

The fift or last in the Text, (That to pittie others in their distresse to shut vp the bowels of others gainst vs in our distresse, pag. 1

To the end.

2. Handled a part.

The Court

selfe) he shall withdraw the light of his countenance, which with ioy thou wert once wont to behold, and thou shalt then be tempted to thinke, he will neuer visite thee with his fauour againe: yeeld not to these temptations, be not out of hope; but nourish, cherish, and maintaine thy hope still how-soeuer. For there can be no better way to keepe thy conscience good and sound, then to maintaine thy faith against doubtings, and thy hope against temptations tending to despaire. Thus at length I haue found an end of this point, the successe whereof I commit to God, the vse whereof I commend to thee; hastening now to the second part of the text. Which is

nd
e The accusation it selfe, which these accusers brought in against themselves, in these words.

We

The Table of the Second part.

2. The Accusation which the Accusers bring in, in which note

1. The division and interpretation together, where

2. The doctrines which are,

1. The forme, H. V. We are verily guiltie, with the meaning of it, p. 89.

1. The object or partie wronged, H. V. concerning our brother, with the sense, p. 89.

2. The matter which is a case of wrong, in which wrong we have 3. things,

2. The Subject or wrong it selfe aggravated by two phrases.

3. The Effect, H. V. Therefore is this distresse come vpon vs: with the meaning, p. 91.

1. We saw the anguish of his soule, with the sense, p. 90.

2. When hee besought vs, we would not heare, with the sense, p. 90.

1. Propounded together, appearing to be five in number. pag. 92.

The first, or third in the order of the text. (That in confession of sinne, we must be ingenious,) pag. 93.

The second or fourth, (That conscience is a faithfull recorder,) pag. 101.

The third or fift in order, (That by how much the neerer bonds we are tied to one another, by so much the sorer torment shall we meete within our consciences,) pag. 123.

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The fift or last in the Text, (That not to pittie others in their distresse, is to shut vp the bowels of others against vs in our distresse, pag. 142.

To the end.

2. Handled a part.

The second
part of
Text.

We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soule when he besought vs, and wee would not heare; therefore is this distresse come upon vs.

WHEREIN we haue to note, both the forme and the matter of the accusation.

The second part sub-di-
uided, and
the words
interpreted
promiscu-
ously.

1. The forme in these words [*We are verily guilty*] that is, *even we Iudah, Since Levi, and the rest of vs brethren, are most certainly, truly without all flattery guiltie.*

2. The matter in the residue of the verse, which is a case of iniury or wrong; where we are to consider: first, the *object*: secondly, the *subject*: thirdly, the *effect* of the wrong. 1. The *object* was *Ioseph*, he was the man to whom they had done the wrong, which they accuse themselves off heere, and him they call brother [*concerning our brother*]

brother] for so he was indeede, by fathers side, though not by mothers side. 2. The *subject* of the wrong or the wrong it self, (which they had offered that their brother) they doe aggrauate against themselves by two phrases; first, [*wee saw the anguish of his soule,*] that is to say: wee wretches after we had first cast him into the pit, and then sold him to the Midianites, we could looke vpon his distresse and perplexitie, with drie eyes without teares, and so our eyes were vnmercifull vnto him: secondly, [*when he besought vs, wee would not beare*] yea, whereas it had behooued vs vpon the very sight of his anguish, to haue decessed from our cruelty; he did beseech vs, entreat vs to spare him, & let him alone, yet we were so hard-hearted, that we would not condescend vnto his entreaty, and so
both

our hearts and eares were vnmercifull vnto him. Thirdly, the effect of the wrong following, in these words: [*therefore is this distresse come vpon vs*] yea, therefore we are now scrued like for like, this distresse of vs being charged for spies, clapped up in prison, cannot be heard to pleade and apologize for our selues, one of vs must now bee laide up in chaines, and God knowes how cruelly he shall be vsed ere we come againe: *this distresse is come vpon vs.* If we ioyne these branches together in a paraphrase, we may imagine these brethren to bring in this accusation against themselves in these termes.

Come brethren come, why stand we pausing with our selues, what this hard-ship meaneth, whence it cometh? Wee euen wee are most certainly without any dissembling or flattery, guiltie of offering great wrong to
our

The paraphrase.

our owne brother, the sonne of our aged father, wee cast him into the pit, we sold him into the hands of Barbarous Merchants, wee looked upon him and laughed at him, when wee saw the dreamer in perplexitie, he entreated us by the bond of fraternitie with teares to spare him, not to deale so hardly with him, and we stopt our eares against his cry, we regarded not his request, would show no kindnesse to him, haue no compassion on him, therefore are we brought into this misery. Now loe we, we are paid home to the full, we are recompenced like for like; This gouernour of the land lookes upon the anguish of our soule, we entreate him, he will not vouchsafe to heare vs, nor beleue vs. This is the summe, heere is the sence.

The conclusions follow, and are five.

1. Confession of sinne must bee ingenuous.

2. Con-

2. *Conscience* keepes a true register.

3. By how much neerer bonds we are tyed to one another, by so much forer torment are we like to feele in our consciences for the wrongs we doe them.

4. *God requites like for like to the wrong doer.*

5. They that are pittilesse to their brethren in the time of their distresse, shall finde others pittilesse to themselves in their distresse.

To begin with the first. *In the Doct. 3. confessing of faults, we must be ingenuous, that is, we must deale truly without hypocrisie, throughly without secrecy or hiding any of our evils; so dealt these brethren of Ioseph heere, charging themselves to be verily guiltie, without fayning or doubting, or laying the fault vpon one another; and eue-ry particular in the wrong, doe they*

Confession of finnes must be ingenuous.

they without hiding confesse and acknowledge, as first how they had looked vpon and laughed at his distresse: secondly, how they had stopped their eares against his cry? This ingenuity wee finde in *David*, who when he was found guilty by *Nathans* sermon; he confessed his whole sinne. *I haue sinned against the Lord.* Marke, hee doth not say, I haue committed adultery alone, or I am guiltie of murther onely, but he saith, *I haue sinned.* I am truly guiltie of all that thou hast charged mee withall. Neither saith he, I haue sinned against *Bathsheba*, against *Vriah* onely, but against the Lord, as well as they; Iust so deales he in confession, after hee had sinned in numbring the people; where he confesseth that he had not simply sinned, but *sinned greatly in that which hee had done*^b. This is euident in *Nehemiahs* prayer

2. Sam. 12.
13.

^b 2. Sam.
24. 10.

prayer^a, where making confession, ^{c Nehem. 1.}
he doth not onely cōfesse his own 6,7.

finnes, but the finnes of the people, wherein hee acknowledged himselfe to haue a share, neither doth he onely *confesse* their finnes of commission, in saying, *we haue dealt very corruptly against thee*, but also of omission, saying, *we haue not kept the commandements, nor the statutes, nor the iudgements which thou commandest thy seruant Moses.*

The very like we haue in Daniels prayer, and confession. *We haue sinned, and haue committed iniquitie, and haue done wickedly, and haue rebelled, &c. Neither haue we hearkened to thy seruants, the Prophets, which spake in thy name,^d &c.*

^d Dan. 9.

And the rather must wee deale ^{5,6.1}
thus ingenuously in the confessi. ^{Reason.}
on of sinne, because we must forsake all sinne, and sorrow for all sinne in good earnest, now if all
sinne

sinne must bee sorrowed for, and that without all hypocrisie, if all sinne must be abandoned, and in good earnest abandoned, then it must as generally as seriously bee confessed and acknowledged.

Use 1.

Reproofe.

Do not they then much transgresse this rule, who are so farre from confessing all their sinnes, that they will confesse none of them, like the proud Pharisee iustifying themselues, when as Publicanes and harlots, who amongst the Iewes were accounted commonly the worst of the people, are like to enter into the kingdome of heauen as soone as they? Do not they also offend this rule, who wil confesse some of their sinnes, but not all of them? if they be noted for swearing, drunkennesse, or some other profane acts they haue committed, happily they will confesse them vnto God, vnto men, but
for

for their more secret evils, which man cannot directly charge them withall, these they confesse not, these they acknowledge not, neither to God who is able to pardon them, nor to men who are fit to pray for them, to giue direction vnto them, how to be freed from the same.

Against both these sorts, I may vrge not onely the present example in my text for their reproofe; but also the words of an holy father of the Church. *Thou hast sinned; thou art guiltie. If therefore thou shalt say, I HAVE NOT SINNED*, excuse those words how thou wilt, thy sinne remaineth in thee, of sinne thou art guiltie, and not onely of that sinne, which thou diddest lately commit (& wilt not confesse) but also of pride, because thou wilt not confesse. And doth it indeede appeare by that father that not to

Aug. in lib. 50. hom. 12. circa finem. Tu fecisti, et reuocasti, si autem dicas non ego feci, ubique verba excusare uolueris, peccatum tuum manet in te, &c.

H

CON-

confesse sinne, is an addition to sinne, an argument of pride and want of humilitie? then thinke thou what little wrong I doe thee, to reprooue thee, who either scornest to confesse thy sinnes at all, or refuselt so ingenuously to open them all to the Lord, as thou oughtest, which tell mee, thou wouldest obtaine pardon for all, wouldest thou not? thou wouldest not be condemned for any, wouldest thou? I tell thee, except thou doest * *agnoscere*, God will not *ignoscere*, without *confession* no *remission*. For the acknowledging of our faults, is the abolishing of our faults^e. Oh folly then that it is for thee whosoeuer thou beest, to make thy soule lyable to confusion heereafter, for want of a sincere and ingenuous confession of thy sinnes in this life. I would I could perswade thee to the contrary, oh that

* A speech often vsed by S. Augustine.

^e Confessio enim peccatorum, abolitio delictorum Chrysost. in Gen. Hom. 19.

that the Lord would be pleased to
make me an instrument of tea-
ching thee better wisdom. *Get*
thee I pray thee, get thee into some
secret place, sift the corners of thy
soule, deale ingenuously and plain-
ly with the Lord; thinke it not
enough to confesse some of thy
finnes, but all of them, not onely
the lesse but also the greater, and
the lesse as well as the greater,
bring before him all the circum-
stances, the manner how, the
time when, the occasions where-
on, the meanes by which the mer-
cies against which thou hast com-
mitted the same. I perswade thee
not to auricular confession as the
Church of Rome enioynes her
penitents; but to that which *Da-
uid*, and *Peter*, and *Paul* have vsed;
to confesse to God, and in case of
necessitie to some faithfull Mini-
ster, to some Christian brother:

Vse 2.

Exhorta-
tion.

A caution.

H 3

when

*Plurimum
enim ad pec-
cata emen-
danda valet
confessio.*

*Chrysost. in
Gen Hom. 9.
1. Aug. ad
fra. in Here-
mo. Hom. 30.*

*2.
Dissipatrix
vitiatorum,
restaura-
rix virtu-
tum, &c.*

when as otherwise thy conscience cannot bee settled and satisfied. Alas, what will it auaille thee to hide any of thy sinnes, when as the Lord knowes all thy sinnes. And how canst thou truly amend any one, when as thou wilt not acknowledge euery one. How highly doth one of the ⁴ Ancients extoll this duty, calling it, *the dispeller of vices, the restorer of vertues, the oppugner of Devils.* Oh holy and admirable confession, thou stoppest vp the mouth of hell, thou openest the gates of heauen. Nothing shall remaine in iudgement against them, who are by this purged from their sinnes. I might vse many arguments to perswade to this, but time would faile mee, neither doth the text in hand require it of mee; The treatises of repentance haue done it for mee, onely that which I wish thee vnto, is ingenuitie in confessing to abhorre

horre hypocrisie and doe it sincerely, to auoyde partiality, and doe it throughly, as well concerning sinnes of omission as commission, of failing in the manner of good duties, as neglecting the matter; plaine dealing is alwaies the best, and is that which will bring most rest vnto thy soule. Hoping that this shal suffice to mooue thee, I leaue this doctrine and proceede to the next which is this,

That the conscience keepes a faithfull register. Doct. 4. See heere what a true Conscience record of that wrong offered to Joseph, the consciences of these brethren tooke, and kept. is a faithfull recorder.

It had set downe euery circumstance in the same, how they had beene pittilesse vnto him, stopt vp their eares against him, yea (as it is very probable) how they had gulled their aged father concerning him, making him beleue that

some euill beast had deuoured him; Conscience had not lost one whit of the cruelty, the villany they had committed against him, but had set downe euery iot and title of the same. Such an infallible register of *Iobs* deedes, did the conscience of *Iob* take, the particulars whereof, it presents vnto him in the time of his extremitie, as is euident in sundry places of his booke. In one place remembering his perseuerance in grace, his loue to the word. *My feete hath held his steppes, his waies haue I kept, and not declined. Neither haue I gone backe from the commandement of his lippes: I haue esteemed the words of his mouth more then mine appointed foode.* In another place presenting his iustice and righteousnessse, his charitie and mercifulnesse to the poore^b. *I deliuered the poore that cryed, and the fatherlesse and him that had none to helpe*

^a *Iob* 23.
11, 12.

^b Chap. 29.
12, 13, 14,
15, 16, 17.

helpe him; The blessing of him that
was ready to perish came upon mee, I
caused the widowes heart to sing for
ioy. I put on righteousness and it
cloathed mee, my iudgement was as
a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the
blinde, and feete to the lame. I was a
father to the poore, &c. In another
place remembring his obedience:
I made a covenant with mine eyes,
that I would not looke upon a maide to
lust after her. I haue not walked with
vanitie, neither hath my foote hastened
to deceit, that whole 31. chapter
being nothing else but a register of
his obedience, which his consci-
ence had set downe before for his
comfort against that time of need;
What shall I speake of David, Eze-
kiah and the rest, whose goodnesse
was recorded in their owne con-
sciences, whatsoever the wicked
did goe about to accuse, and op-
pose them withall. What a faith-

ⁱExod. 10.
16.

^h1. Sam.

12. 14.

¹Chap. 24.

17.

^hAct. 5. 2.

full register of *Pharaohs* iniuries against the Israelitesⁱ, of the Israelites against *Samuel*^h, of *Sauls* against *David*¹, of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* against the *Primitive Church*^m, all their consciences had taken, the word of God doth record, and some of their owne mouthes did report. Hence it is that *conscience* is compared to a booke; For looke as in a booke, men set downe things which they would haue faithfully remembered; so the conscience takes notice of those things which man must and shall remember. Hence is that vsuall prouerbe amongst vs. *The conscience is a thousand witnessses. Why so?*

I. Reason

First, God is the Lord of the conscience, now the Lord is the God of truth, cannot deccieue, and therefore whatsoever he sets down in the conscience must needs bee true, what euer he, that commands the

H

the conscience, will haue the conscience keepe, must bee faithfull, and hence it is, that it takes and keepe so infallible a bill and accounts.

Secondly, the conscience goes not slightly and carelesly to work, **2. Reason**

in taking an account of things, but solidely and substantially, it maketh sure worke. For in the minde (which since make the seate of conscience) there are three faculties, which are as it were the parts of conscience. 1. There is in-

telligence either } contemplatiue,
or
practicall.

2. There is election. 3. There is iudgement or the facultie of iudicatory. Now each of these performeth a severall office. First, Intelligence contemplatiue, hath an office to search out, the principles and

and grounds for information; Intelligence practically, to make or draw out practically minors, for practically syllogismes, from those principles which contemplation findes out, or, if you will more plainly, it is of office to shew truly what *we* haue done, or what *we* haue not done for our owne particular. Secondly, Election is of vse to ioyne maiors to those minors, that is to shew vs that that is good or not good, euill or not euill which wee haue done. Thirdly, iudgement or the iudiciall facultie (as I said) is exercised in pronouncing the reward, or the punishment due for what we haue done. Now then if conscience be busied about true grounds for information, if secondly vpon these grounds it shewes vs directly what particular things *we* haue done, or not done, if thirdly, it shewes the qualities

litie of the things that wee haue done, and that they be either such as ought to be done, or ought not to be done; if finally it pronounces truly the reward due, or the punishment due, must it not needes take a faithfull account, and be a faithfull recorder of our deedes? I can see nothing to the contrary. If *Iob* or *Dauid*, &c. haue the gift of generall vnderstanding in the word, of particular or practicall vnderstanding of themselves and their owne actions, if they can conclude from that word that such things ought to be auoided or performed, and that they in iustice and equitie are so and so to be rewarded, is it much to be marvelled, that their consciences could so faithfullly report vnto them their owne innocency and integritie; Truly no more to be wondered at, then if a man should set downe
some

some true exploite done by some other in a note booke, when hee hath a faithfull informer, to acquaint him, with what the exploite was, who the person was that did it, when the time of the doing of it was; and what reward he had for his labour after he had done it.

Vse 1.

To sundry endes and vses serueth the meditation of this point.

Psal. 19. 1.

The first is the glory of God. If the heauens declare the glory of God as *David* sheweth, & the firmament shew forth his handy worke, vndoubtedly the conscience of man can do no lesse. The one is the booke of nature as well as the other, It is true, there is some difference betwixt them, for the one is internall written on the inside, the other externall written on the outside; yet heerein they agree, that both of them containe in them Lectures of the Makers praises.

praises. Is his wisdom magnified in the booke of the creatures? And is it not as well in the booke of the conscience? Is his goodnes manifest in the one, and not conspicuous in the other? Doth the one shew forth the praise of his power, and not the other declare the glory of his greatness? Wonderful is the Lord in all workes^m? wonderful also in this one of his workes: His wisdom wonderful, his mercy wonderful, his power wonderful, I may adde also his iustice wonderful. His wisdom (I say) for all the Art of man cannot inuent so exquisite a thing, cannot pen so faithfull a record as conscience is. Prognosticators that fetch their wisdom from the Persians, who were once accounted the great Sophists of the world*; Historians that fetch their knowledge, either by the eye from that

Mirandum sane opificium Dei in hominibus est conscientia.
Heming
Synt. p. 156.

* Diogen.
Laert. Vit.
Philosoph.
l. 1. p. 12.

that which they behold, or by the
 eare from that which they heare
 may compose Kalenders, pen Vo-
 lumes, yet may faile in many
 things they set down, and deceiue
 themselves and their readers? but
 in this volume of mans consci-
 ence, whatsoeuer the Lord of the
 conscience sets downe, be it good
 or euill, it is most infallibly and vn-
 doubtedly true. 2. Hisⁿ mercy is
 wonderfull, in that he gives a man
 so faithfull a recorder, to set downe
 all the good acts that for Gods
 glory he vndertaketh and perfor-
 meth; and to suggest vnto his
 thoughts all his failings, that hee
 may quickly turne vnto the Lord
 from them and recover. 3. His
 power is wonderfull in that he can
 rule the conscience in despite of Satan,
 to excuse a man with the register of
 his integritie, let Satan tempt him
 to despaire, to accuse a man with
 the

*Quod &
 ipsum diui-
 na miseri-
 cordia est,
 qua homi-
 nem generi
 concessit, vt
 vnicuique
 nostrum nisi
 tum esset in
 deprauabile
 iudicium
 conscientia
 &c.
 Chrysost. in
 Gen. Hom. 4.*

the recordes of his iniquities, let the deuill labour what hee can to make him secure. Lastly, his iustice is wonderfull, in that he hath made this conscience as a continuall witnesse in the wicked mans hearr, to challenge him without failing for euery thing wherein he is guiltie; wherefore (good Reader) whensoever thou thinkest vpon the faithfulnessse of conscience in keeping of recordes, be not forgetfull to giue the Lord the due glory of these his attributes, appearing and shewing forth themselves in this wonderfull and admirable worke of the conscience.

Secondly, doth conscience keep a faithfull register? then be we admonished in the feare of God, to take heede of committing sinne in secret. For *conscience* will record it, and set it downe, that is most certaine. The twy-light will little
 auaile

auaille the adulterer to take his fill
 of lust in; the night will little
 profit the swaggerer to be drunke
 in; the darke shoppe will little ad-
 uantage the deceiuer to cheate in;
 The wiping of the mouth, the
 cleansing of the out side of the
 cuppe, the new moones, the sprea-
 ding abroad of the hands, &c. will
 little auaille the hypocrite, to de-
 uoure widdowes houses withall,
 to couer his iniustice, the malice
 in his heart, the blood in his
 hands withall. Conscience hath
 such piercing eyes, that it can see
 in the darke, it is such an excel-
 lent Scriuener, it can write in the
 darke. Goethou about the deeds
 of darknesse after the darkest man-
 ner that can be, it takes notice of
 all, it will pen downe euery iot, tit-
 le, and circumstance in all. I tell
 thee in the Court of thy Consci-
 ence the Law is written, that thy
 faults

faults may abound, in thy remembrance, and that it may bring
 ° both thy olde and secret sinnes to light; beware therefore in any case, not onely of open and grosse sinnes, but also of secret and close sinnes. It was well said of a ^P Divine. Why keepest thou close, when as with the ignorance of another thou defilest thine owne conscience. It was well said by an ^a Heathen. If the thing bee dishonest which thou doest, what wil it auaille, though no man know it, if thou thy selfe be priuie to it. Yea what will it profite thee, though all men should praise thee, if thine owne conscience doth accuse thee. Therefore (I say) auoide that which is abominable in Gods sight: let not the most secret place encourage thee to any sinfull practise, alwaies remembering this, that thy secretest

° *Vt & vetera & latentia delicta in lucem pro ducat.*

Brent. in Rom. 1343.

P Tertull. de Idololat. p.

735. cur

enim & latentia, cum ignorantia alterius tuam conscientiam contamines.

a Senec. l. 1. ep. 43. ad calcem.

Si turpia quid refert neminem scire, cum tu scias.

Gregor. in Ezek hom. 9.

Quia enim prodest si omnes laudent,

& conscientia accusat. Mihi sufficit conscientia mea. Aug. ad fr. Mer. 5. 53.

I

euils

euils are not onely set before the sight of Gods countenance, but also noted downe in the booke of thine owne conscience, which one day shall be opened to thine eternall shame, without serious and speedie repentance.

Use 3.

Thirdly, here is comfort to all Christians against those euill surmises that are vniustly conceiued against them, against those contumelious speeches that are wrongfully vttered of them. Some charge thee peraduenture with this thing to disgrace thee, others with that, to take away thy name from thee, as the Iewes charged Christ, to be a coniurer, *John* Baptist a Demoniacke, *Paul* a seducer *Steuens* a Blasphemer*; But haue thou recourse to thy conscience. That same inward witnesse and iudge, that (I say) hath taken a faithfull record of what thou art and hast beene,

^{12.} Math. 12.

^{24.}

^{11.} Math. 11.

^{18.}

^{19.} Act. 19.

^{26.}

^{24.} Chap. 24.

^{6.} Act. 6.

^{13.}

beene, and if that defends thee,
 what hurt can it be to thee though
 all should disgrace thee *. For *Quid pote-*
 looke as the *Sicophants* false praises *rit obesse, fi*
 cannot heale an euill conscience, *omnes dero-*
 no more can the *Slaundersers* con- *gent & sola*
 tumelious speeches, wound a *conscientia*
 good conscience. Doe others ac- *defendat.*
 cuse thee of drunkennesse, and *Gregor. in*
 thine owne conscience testifie thy *Ezek. hom.*
 sobrietie, others charge thee with
 felony, and thy owne conscience
 witnesse the contrary? doe others
 raile on thee for hypocrisie, and
 thy owne conscience witnesse thy
 sinceritie? &c. Beleene thy con-
 science, which is a faithfull testi-
 monie, and cannot deceiue thee
 against all those lying obloquies,
 wherewith euill mouthes goe a-
 bout to deprauē thee. The *Hea-*
 then could say, that *A minde consci-*
 ous of its owne honestie, laughs to *Ouid. Fa-*
 scorne lying infamie. Be then the re- *stor. lib. 4.*
 ports *Consciamens*
reli fama
mendacia
ridet.

ports that are maliciously and
falsely raised of thee, what they
can be, let the innocencie of thy
conscience be a² brazen wall vnto
thee to beare and beate of those
discomforts which by that meane
may be occasioned in thy soule.

*2 Murus a
beneus esto
nil conscire
sibi, &c.*

Horat. Epist.

l. i. Epist. ad

Mecenaten.

Ambros. de

offic. Bene

sibi conscius

falsis non de-

bet moueri

conuictis, nec

astimare

plus ponderis

in alieno esse

conuictio

quam in suo

testimonio.

2 Falli nam-

que saepe po-

terit fama,

conscientia

unquam.

Senec. Epist.

72.

Use 4.

For (as Ambrose saies worthily. *Hee*
that hath a cleere conscience ought
not to be troubled, at false slanders,
neither must he esteeme another mans
reproachfull tale against him, of more
weight then his owne priuate testimo-
nie within him. Looke thou poore
Christian, more to thy conscience
then fame, for² fame may oftentimes
be deceiued, but conscience neuer in
the things which it recordeth.

Last of all, doth conscience
keepe a faithfull register. How
carefull then ought wee to be, to
commit the best things we can to
its custody. How happy will it be
for vs, in distresse at death, and the
day

day of iudgement, to haue our consciences produce to our comfort, and our glory, our holy thoughts and meditations, our deuout prayers and ciaculations, our vertues of louing, fearing, depending on, seruing, honouring the God of heauen, our teares and sighes for our owne sinnes, and the sinnes of the times, our ardent wishes, conscionable endeauours for Sions wel-fare, our denials of our selues, our workes of charitie towards the soules, persons, states and names of others, our goodly counsels, Christian instructions, holy examples, given to them that are yoaked with vs, that are vnder our gouernment, that dwell by vs, that are acquainted with vs? Oh how sweete, how comfortable a thing (I say) will it be vnto vs, to finde a bedrole, a catalogue of such things as these are, when these

sealed bookes (sealed to the world-ward) of our consciences come to be opened and vnclasp-
 ped? Oh (beloued) if we would haue conscience faithfully relate these things then, let vs carefully labour to haue our share in these vertues, let vs conscionably practise these things now, that conscience may record them, and keepe them, against such aftertimes; For whatsoeuer we commit to it, it is an infallible, and trusty keeper of it. It is (as^b one calles it) *a golden closet, the Arke of the covenant, the Kings store-house*: intimating thus much, that like as in a closet a woman layes vp her best Iewels, like as in his treasurie, a King stores vp his richest treasures, against the time and neede of vse, like as in the Arke were reserued the rod of *Aaron*, and pot of *Manna*, for a memoriall to the Israelites: So in a
 good

^b Hugo de
 Anima. l. 2.
 c. 9. Aure-
 um Reclina-
 torium, Ar-
 ca foederis,
 Thesaurus
 Regis.

good conscience the precious
gemmes of inward graces, the
heauenly treasures, the budding
rod of outward vertues, are reser-
ued and kept in store, for the
Christian that hath them, to be v-
sed by him, when time serueth,
when neede requireth, to be re-
membred of him to his priuate
comfort, and to his glory amongst
others, when there is neede of the
memorials. Not one teare shed for
thy sinnes, by way of hearty re-
pentance, not one prayer made to
Gods Maiestie out of a deuout
and contrite spirit, not one dutie
performed in a conscionable obe-
dience to Gods will, not a cup of
cold water giuen to a disciple, in
the name of a Disciple, but as God
sees it, so conscience notes it: how
frequent, how abundant then in
these and the like yeares, in these
and the like duties oughtest thou

to be, that this faithfull notary of thy conscience may bee stuffed with good things for thy comfort, not with euill for thy terrour. What neede of pressing hath this dutie, in regard of the desperate carelesnesse of most people? who regard not how emptie of grace, how full of sinne their hearts be, how voyde of good fruits, how abounding with euill fruits, their liues be? They care not what Items for murther, for theft, for wantonnesse, for vsurie, briberie, blasphemie, hypocrisie, cosenage, pride, malice, neglect of the works of pietie to God, of mercy towards their neighbour, they commit to the booke of their conscience, as though it were a booke neuer to be opened; as though the doctrine in hand were an vntruth, and conscience an vnfaithfull parchment, either full of
blanckes

blancks, or lyes? In stead of praying, they will sweare, in stead of blessing, they curse, in stead of fearing God, they dare him, of loving him, they hate him, of trusting in him, they murmur against him, of frequenting his house, they frequent the stews, the tauerne, the play-house, in stead of a righteous carriage towards man, their conuersation is vnrighteous, in stead of a sober carriage in regard of themselves, they are most intemperate, unruly, neither can reason, nor religion, bridle their affections. Poore CONSCIENCE hath nothing but THESE things to record, for the time present, to report, to bring forth in time to come; which is a most lamentable thing to consider. I would these desperate creatures, would goe to 'Nature to schoole. An euill conscience (saith that) may often-

oftentimes be safe, yet it is neuer secure, that is to say, although an euill mans conscience bee many times without present terrour, yet it is neuer so carelesse, but it is a recorder, in taking account of thoughts, words, and deedes, it is neuer idle. There's Natures position: what is the vse shee makes of it? Marke what followes.

*Itaque m-
bilei com-
miserio nisi
quod amico
committere
possis.*

Therefore thou shalt commit nothing to conscience, but what thou maiest commit to a friend. And what that is, euery one almost knowes; To friends secrets are committed, and if our secretest deedes bee good, conscience will be our friend to blaze them forth to our comfort and renowne, and that most faithfully, vndeceiueably, though the world takes no knowledge, makes no acknowledgement of the same.

Doct. 5. I passe on now to the 3. point in the second part of my text.

That

That by how much the stronger the
 bonds be, whereby men are tyed to
 one another, by so much the sorer the
 torment is like to be in the conscience,
 for the wrongs they offer to one ano-
 ther. It was the breach of the bond
 of brother-hood that (no doubt) in-
 creased the horror of these bre-
 thren in this their distresse, doth
 not their speech bewray as much?
We are verily guilty concerning O V R
B R O T H E R; this same *B R O-*
T H E R, flucke much in their sto-
 macke. It was the wronging of his
Father, his louing *Father*, who had
 giuen him his patrimonie, affected
 him deerely, showne kindnesse to
 him continually, which made the
 inward gripes the stronger, and the
 outward cries the louder, of the
 yong prodigall. It was the be-
 traying of his Master, his kinde
 Master (who had called him to an
 Apostleship, betrusted him with
 the

By offering
 wrong to
 breake the
 bonds of
 vnion, is an
 aggraua-
 tion of the
 hearts hor-
 rour.

• Luke 15.
 18. 21.

Math. 27.
3.

2. Sam.
12. 13.
Psal. 51.

the Stewardship (whom he was so bound vnto, that if neede had required, he should rather haue beene prodigall of his owne blood for his sake, then haue betrayed his innocent blood,) that encreased the horreur, the heart-smart of *Iudas*^f. It was no doubt the spoiling of the life, the defiling of the wife of his *Servant*, his trusty and faithfull *Servant Vriah*, (who lay watching and warring in the open fields for *Dauids* sake, whom *Dauid* was beholding vnto for his loue and seruice,) that did augment the trouble of *Dauids* conscience, when the Lord in mercy awaked him^s. Did you neuer reade nor heare of *Nero*, how that the murthier of his mother, (whom nature bound him to) and the slaughter of his kindred, (whom the same bond tyed him to) did so vex and torment him, that neither
day

day nor night could hee be quiet,
 but still hee thought his mothers
 ghost did appeare vnto him, and
 the furies of hell were ready at
 hand to torment him^h? The like
 is storied of *Alexander*, who ha-
 uing slaine a deere friend of his
 named *Clytus*, who had in loue
 showne his readinesse to haue died
 for *Alexander*ⁱ, was so terrified in
 his minde, that hee would haue
 killed himselfe with that weapon
 wherewith hee slew *Clytus*, if his
 guard had not prevented him, he
 lay groueling vpon the earth, fil-
 led the whole court with misera-
 ble howling and out-cries, asked
 those that stood by him, whether
 they could suffer such a *wretch* as
 himselfe was to liue, cloistered vp
 himselfe in his tent, and would
 haue pined himselfe to death, if
 his seruants had not by strong
 hand compelled him to take
 meate,

^h Sueton. in
 vit. Nero-
 nis. c. 34.
 35.

ⁱ Curt. lib. 8.
 p. 119. si
 moriendum
 est pro te,
 Clytus est
 primus.

* Etego ser-
uatorum
meorum la-
tro reuertar
in patriam.
Curt. lib. ci-
tat. pag.
120. 121.
122.

meate, still this being his pitti-
full song^k, I shall retorne into my
owne countrey a murtherer of my
S A V E R S, (my Sauers,) this ag-
grauated his horror, this (questi-
onlesse) added to his terrour, that
hee should so wrong one, that
had rather beene his sauer then
his enemye, whose loue hee was
bound (as the light of nature
taught him) to haue rewarded in
a better kinde. Thus we see the
truth of the point, how that the
strength of bonds, to tie vs to one
another, doth encrease the per-
plexitie of the conscience for
those iniuries we doe or shall offer
to one another.

Vse.

Heare this, all you, whom no
bonds (no not of nature, of blood
it selte) can keepe within the
compasse of loue, of equitie,
whose hearts are malignant, whose
tongues are virulent, whose cour-
ses

ses are violent against your owne kinred, the father rising vp against the sonne, the sonne against the father, the mother against the daughter, the daughter against the mother, husband against wife, wife against husband, brother against brother, sister against sister: a mans enemies being not onely of his owne house, but also of his owne blood; Heare you I say, this word of the Lord, take it in by the care, and apply it to the heart. Poore wretches, what wrong doe you offer your owne consciences? you pile vp horror for them, you treasure vp terror against them. The stronger the knots be to binde you to vnity, the sorer shall your anguish be for your fruits of enmitie. *Achitophel* stood but in a ciuill relation to *David*, as a *subiect* to his Prince, yet hee was terrified for giuing euill counsell against him.

2. Sam.
17.23.

Act. 16.
24.30.

him^l, The laylor but in a domesticall relation to *Paul* and *Silas*, as a laylor to his prisoners, yet hee was affrighted for laying bolts vpon them^m. And doe you thinke that you may offer vnnaturall violence, to those; betwixt whom and you there is naturall reference, and your consciences will neuer accuse you? as sure as can be you are deceiued. Let but brethren in the same Ecclesiasticall function, fellow Magistrates in the same temporall vocation, fellow seruants in the same family, fellow neighbours in the same countrey, offer wrong to one another. I cannot warrant *THEM* securitie from stings of conscience. But to deale cruelly with thine owne yoakefellow, to hate, to reuile, to abuse thy parents, whom thou oughtest to loue, honour, and obey, to be without naturall affection to thine
owne

owne children, who are thine
owne bowels, to deale doggedly
with thy neere kinred, and vn-
kindly with those of whose kind-
nesse thou hast so bountifully ta-
sted, is a thing so horrible, so iniu-
rious, that I dare warrant thee
will cost stings intollerable, yea
(without repentance,) wounds of
conscience incurable. For if it be
n true innocencie, not to hurt a deadly
foe, then it must needs be iniurie in
graine to wrong a deere friend;
and the greatest sinnes must haue
the greatest punishments, of which
punishments torture of consci-
ence is one, yea the greatest in
this life, if it produceth despaire,
as it many times doth. If therefore
it bee thy hap to heare or reade
this, who art at enmity with those
to whom thou art tyed by the
bonds of nature or kindnesse, let

*n Illa est
vera inno-
centia, quæ
nec inimico
nocet.
August. in
Psal.*

K

rice

mee entreate this at thy hands, that thou wouldest labour with the serious meditation of this, vpon thine inordinate and violent affections, that it may cause thee to relent, for thy former enmitie, and breake in sunder those barres of contention, whereby thy heart hath beene bolted vp against thy brother so long a time.

Doct. 6.

That Re-
taliation is
Gods Law.

The fourth point followeth :

That the Lord requites like for like to the wrong doer. Iust as these brethren had dealt with Ioseph, so (so in their owne apprehension at least) are they dealt withall themselves; Therefore is this distresse come vpon vs. As we sowed, so we reape, as we measured, so is it measured to vs againe. We looked vpon Iosephs distresse, this man looks vpon our, wee would not heare our brother speaking for himselfe, this man
now

now will not heare vs, we carryed
home to our father a false tale of Io-
sephs death, now (will we, will wee)
we shall be compelled to carry him too
true newes of the bonds of one of our
brethren. If this were not a truth,
wherefore was that law of giuing
life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth,
hand for hand, foote for foote, bur-
ning for burning, wound for wound,
° &c. It was the decree of the
Lord against the Babylonians, that
the Medes and Persians, should
deale with them, as they had dealt
with the Israelites, as appeareth
in the booke of Ieremie. I will re-
compence them according to their
deedes, and according to the workes of
their owne hands^p. Put your selues in
aray against Babylon, all yee that bend
the bow, &c. take vengeance upon
her as shee hath done, so doe vnto
her^q. As Babylon hath caused the

° Exod. 21.
24, 25, 26.
Deut. 2.4.
Chap. 19.
20.
Deut. 19.
21.

^p Iere. 25.

14.

^q Iere. 50.

14. 15.

*slaine of Israel to fall, so at Babylon
[Jer. 5. 49.] shall fall the slaine of all the earth^r.*

*Much to this effect is that of Eze-
kiel: As I live (saith the Lord) I will
doe according to thine anger, and ac-
[Ezek. 35.] cording to the enuy which thou hast
rr. used out of thy hatred against them^s.
Where he threatneth to deale cru-
elly with the Edomites, as he had
dealt vnmmercifully with the Israe-
lites. The very same is repeated
by Obediah in the 15. and 16. verses
of his prophesie. As thou hast done,
it shall bee done to thee, thy reward
shall returne vpon thine owne head,
for as ye haue drunke vpon mine holy
mountaine, so shall all the heathen
drinke continually. It is not vn-
knowne what Samuel said, and did
to Agag King of Amaleck. As thy
sword made women childlesse, so shall
thy mother bee childlesse among wo-
men. And Samuel hewed Agag in
pieces,*

pieces, before the Lord in Gilgal¹. The ^{1. Sam.}
ground of this, I take to be the di- ^{15. 30.}
tributive iustice of God, which is *Reason*
to reward euery man according to
his workes, according to that of
Iob, For the worke of a man shall he
render vnto him, and cause euery man
to finde according to his waies^u. Now ^{u Iob 34.}
if it be the office of that iustice, to ^{11.}
deale with men according to their
workes, must not that man that
offereth wrong to his neighbour,
looke to meete with the like at the
hand of another? * Vnlesse hu- * *Preoccu-*
miliation, and restitution preuent *patio.*
it, he may vndoubtedly looke for
it, or else for some heauier pu-
nishment in the stead thereof, ei-
ther heere, or heereafter.

What a bridle to curbe our in- ^{vse 1.}
iurious hearts, what a chaine to
binde our iniurious hands, what a
locke to barre vp the doore of our
lippes

lips from vniust thoughts, words,
 and deedes against one another;
 May the serious consideration of
 this point bee? I perswade my
 selfe, there is none of vs would be
 content to haue iniurie offered our
 selues by others: Why, oh why
 then shall wee delight to offer
 wrong to others, our selues? woul-
 dest thou not loose the life of thy
 childe? take not away then the
 life of thy seruant, another mans
 childe. For *Absolons* blood did
 pay for *Vriahs* *. Wouldest thou
 not haue the adulterer enter into
 thy bed? defile not thou the mar-
 riage bed of thy neighbour, for
Dauids adulteric committed with
Bathsheba, was requited with the
 defiling of his owne concubines
 by his owne sonne *. Wouldest
 thou not haue others disdaine and
 disregard thee? disdaine thou not,
 dis-

* 2. Sam.
 18.14.

* 2. Sam.
 16.22.

disregard thou not other men? for
 if *Ismaels hand* be against every man,
 every mans hand shall bee against
 him ^y. Wouldest thou not haue ^y Gen. 16.
 others set traps for thee? spread ^{12.}
 thou no nets, digge thou no pits
 for another: for if *Haman* seekes
 the ruine of the Iewes, *Esther*
 shall plotte his ouerthrow ². Woul- ² Compare
 dest thou not haue anothers wise- ^{Esther 3.}
 dome worke the confusion? vse ^{with}
 not thy wit for anothers harme: ^{Chap. 7. 6.}
 For if *Achitophels* wit bee against
 the Lords *Anoynted*, *Hushais* wise-
 dome shall confound his ^a. Woul- ^a 2. Sam.
 dest thou not be slandered? slan- ^{17. 7, 8.}
 der not; wouldest thou not bee
 cosened? deceiue not: wouldest
 thou not be oppressed? oppresse
 not: wouldest thou not haue an-
 other man encrease his reuenues
 vpon thy ruine, suffice not thine
 owne bagges with the beggering
 K 4 of

of others : wouldest thou not
leauē thy wife, thy children, a prey
to the extortioners, oppressours
and cormorants gullet, to haue the
state that thou bequeathest them,
the inheritance thou leauēst them,
deuoured by him, consumed of
him, after thou art dead and gone?
robbe not the orphanē of his in-
heritance, deceiue not the widdow
of her maintenance, while thou
liuest ; for if thou doest, their
wrongs will cry for vengeance, and
neuer lin vntill either in thy selfe,
or thy seede, thou be payed home
in the like kinde : wouldest thou
not haue thy children (if thou hast
or shalt haue any) rob thee of the
honour they owe thee? cut not
thou thy parents short of that
dutie thou owest them : If thou
beest vnder their charge, show thy
dutie by obeying their command;

If

If God hath blessed thee with the worlds good aboue them, show thy thankfulnesse, by releeuing their wants. If thou beest aduanced to places of honour aboue them, show thy respect by reuercing their persons, as *Salomon* did *Bathshebas* ^b. If they happen to ^b *1. King. 2.* slippe and fall (as the best doe) ^{19.} show thy loue by couering their frailties, as *Sem* and *Japhet* did *Noahs nakednesse*. Otherwise, looke ^c *Gen. 9.* for irreuerence, vnnaturall affection, disobedience, blazing thy faults, from thy children as a iust recompence returned vnto thee. Lastly, wouldest thou not haue thy seruants vndutifull, vnfaithfull to thee? when thou shalt come to haue any vnder thee? deale thou then neither vndutifully nor vnfaithfully with thy master. In a word, what we would not that others

thers should doe to vs, let vs not doe to them. For euill shall be to the euill doer; and the distributive Iustice of the Almighty doth measure out the like portion to man, that man measureth to his brother.

Vse. 2.

Secondly, when wrongs are offered vs in any kinde by others; this should teach vs to examine and try, whither we be not guiltie of offering the like to others. Thou complaineest peradventure; *No man so deceiued as I am:* but hast thou not beene a deceiuer thy selfe? thou criest out, *none so slandered, so disgraced, oppressed vniustly, iniuried as I haue beene;* but hast not thou slandered, disgraced, oppressed, wronged others? Thou makest thy mone, that thou hast a crosse yoake-fellow ouer thou hadst before, before a louing husband,

band, now a cruell one, before a kinde curteous wife, now an vnkinde and kirt one. But how didst thou vse thy former yoake-fellow, how dealtst thou with her, how behauedst thou thy selfe towards him? it may be currishly, crabbedly. Thou complainest of the disobedience of thy children, how that they will not be conformable to thee, will not be ruled by thee, they are prodigall against thy will, marry without thy consent, and thou canst not keepe them within compasse: Thou complainest of the idlenesse, and vntrustinesse of thy seruants; except thy eye be alwaies on them, thou canst haue no worke done by them, thou dardest not trust them, they are so lime-fingred, thou dardest scarce speake to them, they are so saucy tongued. It may be when thou wert in the
con-

condition of a childe, thou wert as disobedient to thy parents, it may be thou hast beene out nights and daies in base company against their liking, it may be thou hast bin stubbornne at their threats, disobedient to their voyce, it may be (without all respect of pietie and honestie) thou didst match thy selfe against their liking. Peradventure, when thou wert a servant, thou wert unruly, untrusty, idle, saucy thy selfe. When these and the like wrongs cause thee to complaine; Pause a little with thy selfe, and say; *Have not I done thus and thus with others, as others do with mee:* The Lord (thou seest) doth requite wrong for wrong, into the bosome of the wrong doer; And it may be vpon examination, thou maiest finde thy selfe guiltie of the same offence; If thou doest, then
give

giue vnto God the glory of his distributiu iustice, and say as *Adonibezek* did, when his thumbes and great toes were cut off. *As I haue done, so God hath requited me*^b. Judg. 1.7.

And if thou hast not yet repented, or so soundly repented as thou shouldest, repent at length and cease to doe euill in that kinde. But if so bee vpon examination, thou finde thine owne innocency, or hauing beene so guiltie hast repented, and yet art thus and thus wronged still, beare thy crosse with patience, beseech God to sanctifie it vnto thee, to humble thee by it, and make it a preseruatiue for thee, against doing the like wrongs thy selfe, though thou shouldest haue neuer so fit occasions, neuer so strong temptations to the same. So much for that doctrine.

Then

Doct. 7. The next and last thus. *That they shall finde little pittie at the hands of others in their distresse, who haue beene without pittie to their brethren, in the time of their distresse.* This could these brethren confesse heere. That *Iosephs* pittiless carriage, (as they receiued it at that time) towards them, was caused by their owne want of pittie towards him in the time of his misery. The comparing of the 137. *Psalme*, with the thirteenth of *Isaiah*, verse 18. will make this good. Out of the former place, wee may gather how pittiless to the captiue Iewes, the Babylonians were flouting and gibering at them (*ⁱ Sing vs one of the songs of Sion:*) And in the *⁴* latter, we finde how pittiless the Medes and Persians should be to *T H E M*, beeing called vpon by God, by a propheticall

ⁱ Psal. 137.

⁴ Isa. 13. 18

ticall Apostrophe, to dash their
yong men to pieces before their eyes,
to haue no pittie on the fruits of their
wombe, neither should their eye
spare their little children. This
particular, hath some witnesse,
from Iames his generall^e; Hee^e Iam. 2.
shall haue iudgement without mer-^{13.}
cie, that hath shewed no mercie.
Because thou hast spoiled many na-
tions (saith Habakuck speaking to
the cruell Chaldeans) that is pit-
tileffely vsed many people, there-
fore the remnant of the people shall
spoil thee^f, yea deale pittileffely^f Hab. 2. 8.
with thee. For when men fall to
the spoile, then they rage like
wilde beasts with little pittie, if
with any at all.

A point making much to the vse 1.
terroure of all mercilesse and pitti-
lesse persons, who pittie not the
wants of them that are in pouer-
tie,

tie, who minde not the griefes of
 them that are in misery: who
 threw their brethren into the pit,
 the prison for small trifles, and
 will not bee perswaded to release
 them: who haue the cry of the
 poore at their gates, at their
 doores, and will not be mooued
 to relceue them: who heare the
 newes of the troubles of Gods
 people at this day, sounding in
 their eares, and yet are not pro-
 uoked to regard them. Is it pro-
 probable that these men shall haue
 mercie showne them in the time
 of their misery? Probable? no,
 not possible, except repentance
 change them, and compassion
 cloath them to make them better.
 For if they be blessed that are full
 of *mercie*, their happinesse part-
 ly consistin in this, *that they shall*
obtaine mercie, then they are wret-
 ched

ched who are voyde of pittie, and this is one piece of their wretchednesse, that they finde little pittie at the hands either of God or man. Tell mee (*Naball*) if the Lord should euer strip thee of thy abundance (as hee can doe it in a moment, for hee that gaue all can take all at his pleasure) who thinkest thou should succour thee, when thou refushest to heare the poore mans erie? Tell me thou that forgettest *Ierusalem*, if the Lord in his iust iustice should suffer those hellish fire-brands the Iesuiticall faction, to set our land on fire, to stirre vp ciuill dissention amongst vs (as they haue at this day done in *France*) if hee should send a fierce nation against vs, let in the enimie vpon vs, vnto which and more then which the abominations of the land haue opened

L ned

^h Jerem. 12.
10.

ned a wide gap already; what eye (thinkest thou) would pittie thee, what hand would spare *thee*, when as neither thy heart yearneth, nor eye watreth at the *desolation of Gods pleasant portion^h*, at the great affliction of the Lords heritage in our neighbour nations? Tell me thou malicious one (who seemest to be made all of *Revenge*) that throwest thy brother into prison, (as these my text speakes off did *Ioseph* into a pit) for a dreame, a trifle, that threatnest to haue his skinne, swearest not to leaue him worth a groate, trouncest him vp and downe, from post to pillar, from court to court, from affize to to affize, for little or nothing almost, tell me (I say) how lookest thou to escape the like measure? Is there neuer a prison, neuer a bench, neuer a barre, no like extremitie,

tremitie, and rigour of law for thee? Are there not as mercilesse ones, as pittilesse ones, to vexe, spoile and vndoe thee, vpon as slight an occasion as thou molestest thy brother, if thou doe but giue it? In a word, whoeuer thou beest, who puttest of all pitie, and cloathest thy selfe with crueltie, is it impossible thinkest thou, for thee to bee vnmercifully dealt withall thy selfe, if thou doest, thou art much mistaken. For (as the Heathen could tell vs,) *ruine, hatred, poysons, swords doe follow such an one at the hard heeles.*

Senec. de clemen. l. 1. cap. 25.

Nam talem virum, a tergo sequitur everfio, odia venena, gladij.

To adde therefore a word of exhortation and so conclude; let vs bee perswaded to cloath our selues with the robes of pittie, towards them that are in distresse: *Vse 2.* Heare wee others make their moane to vs, others will heare vs

make our moane to them. Re-
leeue we the wants of others, o-
thers will releeue ours; Mourne
for others troubles, others will
mourne for ours; Comfort we o-
thers in their sorrowes, others will
comfort vs in ours. If according
to the heauenly patterne wee bee
mercifull; our heauenly Father
will take such order, that pit-
tie shall be shewne vs in
middest of our
aduersitie.

FINIS.

